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**TRANSFORMING LIVELIHOODS AT THE MARGINS:  
UNDERSTANDING CHANGING CLASS DYNAMICS IN KARAMOJA, UGANDA**

Matteo Caravani

PhD Development Studies

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Institute of Development Studies  
University of Sussex

**Author's declaration**

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been submitted, either in the same or different form to this or any other University for a degree.

**Signature:**

## **Abstract**

Over the past two generations, livestock loss and hunger – caused by violent conflict and drought – drove many transhumant agro-pastoralists living in central Karamoja to resettle in unpopulated areas more suitable for agricultural production. These areas, mostly located in the southern and western parts of the region, were historically used by herdsman as dry season grazing rangelands, while they now house permanent settlements populated by sedentarized ‘marginal farmers’ and town-based workers. The village of Lojom, located in one of the most fertile areas of Karamoja in the vicinity of a small trading centre, presents a perfect example of this process of livelihood transformation, since most of its inhabitants and predecessors were former herders.

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the causes and drivers of socioeconomic differentiation in the village of Lojom through an extended case study. The major studies on pastoralism of the past thirty years demonstrate there has been an increased impoverishment and destitution among former pastoralists as a result of sedentarization. This thesis argues that the transition from the traditional agro-pastoral system to a more diversified set of economic activities and livelihoods has introduced new dynamics in class relations. The newly established relations of production among classes have polarized the inhabitants of Lojom into a handful of ‘elite’ families and a majority of destitute families. While the better off and middle classes foster their wealth accumulation through livelihood differentiation, residence in town and engagement with traditional livelihood systems, the poor and very poor barely meet their food requirements and have almost no opportunities for wealth accumulation. Further, this transition has also amplified the systematic exploitation of women’s labour by male heads of families, to the point that within a single family belonging to the wealthiest class the level of welfare of the women is much lower than that of the men. In conclusion, the current relations of production among social classes and gender groups in Lojom can only reproduce the material and social conditions that ultimately create and maintain poverty for many.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

FAO Food and Agriculture Organization  
IOM International Organization for Migration  
LC Local Council  
LDU Local Defence Unit  
LRA Lords Resistance Army  
NGO Non-Governmental Organization  
NRM National Resistance Movement  
NUSAF2 Second Northern Uganda Social Action Fund  
OPM Office of the Prime Minister  
SAGE Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment  
UBOS Uganda Bureau of Statistics  
UPDF Uganda People's Defence Forces  
UPE Universal Primary Education  
WFP World Food Programme

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Photo 2: LDUs in Lokupooi kraal

Photo 3: Preparation of *kweete* in Iriiri centre

## GLOSSARY

| <b><i>Ngakaramojong</i></b>    | <b>English</b>   |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <i>Aberu</i>                   | wife   |
| <i>Akamu</i>                   | dry season   |
| <i>Akayaran f. Ekayaran m.</i> | under the protection of someone                        |
| <i>Akidoldol</i>               | income earning activity                                |
| <i>Akiporo</i>                 | rainy season   |
| <i>Akiriket</i>                | sacred assembly  |
| <i>Akitopolor</i>              | transferring of power across generation sets           |
| <i>Akoro</i>                   | hunger   |
| <i>Akulyakanu/Ebulyoit</i>     | traditionally poor in cattle                           |
| <i>Akuj</i>                    | god  |
| <i>Amalaya</i>                 | prostitute   |
| <i>Apeican</i>                 | one hand or one donkey                                 |
| <i>Asapan</i>                  | initiation   |
| <i>Ateker</i>                  | kraal formed by people of the same clan                |
| <i>Awi</i>                     | temporary cattle camp                                  |
| <i>Eboutila</i>                | local brew from north Karamoja                         |
| <i>Echarakan</i>               | milk mixed with blood                                  |
| <i>Elabo</i>                   | ghee mixed with milk                                   |
| <i>Ekabaka</i>                 | king   |
| <i>Ekabaran</i>                | rich person  |
| <i>Ekal</i>                    | family unit/or each home                               |
| <i>Ekapolon</i>                | big man or chief, king, and leader in the battle       |
| <i>Ekeboyon</i>                | unemployment   |
| <i>Ekek</i>                    | polygynous families                                    |
| <i>Ekicul</i>                  | payment for the first born                             |
| <i>Ekile</i>                   | husband  |
| <i>Ekukurana</i>               | hard working people                                    |
| <i>Ekulyakit</i>               | poor person  |
| <i>Elabo</i>                   | <i>ghee</i> mixed with milk                            |
| <i>Emanikwor</i>               | garden rights  |
| <i>Ere/manyatta</i>            | permanent settlement                                   |
| <i>Etulè</i>                   | strong spirit  |
| <i>Espan</i>                   | herd unit  |
| <i>Karamojong</i>              | the inhabitants of Karamoja region                     |
| <i>Karimojong</i>              | three territorial sections: Bokora, Matheniko and Pian |
| <i>Kimuk ekile</i>             | covering the man/husband                               |
| <i>Kutu kutu</i>               | local brew mainly made of sorghum                      |
| <i>Kweete</i>                  | local brew   |
| <i>Leja-leja</i>               | agricultural and non-agricultural wage labour          |

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <i>Lomutu</i>                | one fat ram  |
| <i>Mabati</i>                | iron sheets for roofing                              |
| <i>Ngakaramojong</i>         | language of the Karamojong                           |
| <i>Ngamanat s. amana</i>     | once daughters married they left their garden rights |
| <i>Ngamatidai or amatida</i> | rifles made with borehole parts and school furniture |
| <i>Ngaiyoi</i>               | temporary cattle camps                               |
| <i>Ngibaren</i>              | traditionally wealth in cattle                       |
| <i>Ngikaburak</i>            | traditionally wealth in cattle and powerful          |
| <i>Ngireria</i>              | permanent settlements                                |
| <i>Ngitella or Ekitela</i>   | temporary cattle camps based on territorial section  |
| <i>Ngitungakan</i>           | stock-associates                                     |
| <i>Ngiyenet a ngaatuk</i>    | cattle kin   |
| <i>Omena</i>                 | mud fish   |
| <i>Posho</i>                 | local polenta  |

*This thesis is dedicated to all my Karamojong friends*

## 1. Introduction

Towards the end of 2008 I was living in Uganda and I planned a trip to Karamoja with some friends who were working in the region. I was intrigued by the precautions that were necessary to travel around the region: moving at night with two land cruisers no more than fifty meters from each other in order to minimize the risk of being ambushed by Karamojong warriors. One year after my first trip to the north, I was offered a consultancy with the World Food Programme (WFP) and I specifically requested to be based in Karamoja. For the next two years I worked as a programme officer in Kaabong, one of the remotest corners of Karamoja. Through this experience I learnt about the problems encountered by the Karamojong as well as state and aid responses to these. Whenever there was a drought, unconditional food aid was provided, meanwhile, in 'normal years', employment was guaranteed for many through food and cash-for-work schemes. Karamojong people experienced persistent poverty and food insecurity despite the continuous provision of aid relief, with virtually no hope of improving the situation.

Living in Uganda, one becomes accustomed to hearing negative, stereotypical and oftentimes offensive depictions of Karamojong, accompanied by comments such as: 'we cannot wait for Karamoja to develop'. The notion of 'underdevelopment' is typically associated to those who practice nomadic pastoralism,<sup>1</sup> who are seen as the cause of environmental destruction and are frequently pejoratively characterised as 'naked', 'illiterate' and chronically in conflict due to their 'warrior nature' of cattle raiders. These prejudices are often invoked to justify both the high levels of poverty in Karamoja compared to the rest of the country, and the need for the state and aid agencies to 'bring development' or 'civilization' to the region in the form of sedentarization, agriculture and formal education. The historical prejudices towards Karamoja have been further enhanced by the lack of external engagement with the region up until recently, due to high levels of insecurity and poor road networks and systematic marginalisation by the state. In addition, differently from other countries such as Ethiopia, South Sudan and Kenya, where there are several ethnic groups

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<sup>1</sup> There is widespread misinformation in Uganda regarding the Karamojong traditional modes of production and lifestyle.

identified as pastoralists living in the dry lands of these countries, in Uganda the Karamojong are the only arid zone peoples confined to one region. The rest of the country does not understand or does not want to understand Karamoja's many hardships,<sup>2</sup> such as the recurrent droughts and erratic rainfalls and floods, which are endemic features due to the region's ecological nature (see Chapter Six). These result in the development of *ad hoc* adaptive measures by the local people in order to survive in such an environment. The current debate among government officials and donors on what is termed as 'the Karamoja problem' presents an acute lack of historical perspective and understanding of the context of the region. For example, 'by 1990, "Karamoja" and "crisis" came to be synonymous in Uganda' (Mamdani *et al.*, 1992: 2).

In 2012, I moved to the UK to start my studies at the Institute of Development Studies. I spent almost the entire first year reading the literature on pastoralism, humanitarian and development policies and then the fundamental ethnographies on Karamoja. While I was reading, I felt ashamed at my lack of knowledge, particularly in terms of the history, cultural habits and traditional modes of production and governance in the region, which made me question the relevance of the programmes we implemented while I was at the WFP.

At the end of 2012, I went back to Karamoja to conduct an ethnographic study for the Overseas Development Institute on the impact of cash transfer programmes among the elderly, which functioned as a sort of 'pension system' for the Karamojong, funded by British tax payers. I opted for the sub-county of Iriiri (in Napak district in the south-western part of the region inhabited mainly by the Bokora) as the site for the ethnography. I had never lived in Iriiri before but I had some Italian friends who lived there for more than a decade and I thought that their in-depth knowledge of the area would be useful for my work as well. Through the ethnography, I began to learn about the radical changes and ruptures experienced by the people of Iriiri over the time span of two generations and what was supposed to be a short fieldwork for a consultancy became the site for my PhD fieldwork from October 2012 until July 2014.

This thesis is about a group of agro-pastoral peoples located in the Karamoja region in north-eastern Uganda. Over the time span of two generations, the

---

<sup>2</sup> Interview with regional informant number #3 (see Appendix I).



Karamojong<sup>3</sup> peoples have transformed their modes of production from a transhumant agro-pastoral to a sedentarized and more diversified economic system. The aim of my study is to explore the consequences and impacts of the changes in modes of production, accumulation and social reproduction across and within families. I do this through an extended case study of the village of Lojom, located in the south-western part of Karamoja.

Over the past century, the nomadic pastoral mode of production has become increasingly difficult to conduct in many parts of Africa (Catley *et al.*, 2013). The main reasons for this difficulty have been attributed to policies of marginalization and deprivation carried out by colonial administrations and post-colonial governments, which were based on historical misconceptions as to the ‘irrationality’ of pastoral modes of production (Scoones, 1995a; Perrier, 1995; Catley *et al.*, 2013). In Africa, the relatively recent incorporation of pastoral peoples by the central state, coupled with wider processes of centralised economic development, have provoked huge social and economic changes to pastoralist’s livelihoods (Anderson and Broch-Due, 1999; Devereux, 2010; Livingston and Ruhindi, 2013). This process of ‘incorporation’ by the state has produced what McCabe (1994) has defined as ‘resistance to encapsulation’, in reference to the Turkana peoples’<sup>4</sup> resistance to the state and world economy incorporation. Such processes resonate deeply with state formation process across the continent commencing with colonialism, whereby the incorporation of remote or marginalized regions into the colonial administration has usually entailed a ‘fall not just into poverty but also into a state of dependency on social and material forces beyond their control’ (Comaroff and Comaroff, 1997: 151).

The region of Karamoja, located in the north-eastern part of Uganda, also finds its place within this history of marginalization and incorporation into the state, often

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<sup>3</sup> During the course of the thesis I will use two terms to refer to the peoples of Karamoja: ‘Karimojong’, which includes those from the three major territorial sections of Bokora, Matheniko and Pian who, before the 1970s, considered themselves as one tribe (Knighton, 2010) and ‘Karamojong’ to refer to the inhabitants of the districts of Karamoja, which includes the sub-ethnic groups of the Dodoth (Kaabong), Jie (Kotido), Pokot (Amudat), Labwor (Abim) and other smaller groups, as well as the three Karimojong sections mentioned above.

<sup>4</sup> The Turkana are pastoral peoples inhabiting mainly north-western Kenya around the area of Lake Turkana and bordering Karamoja.

met with the Karamojong's resistance to commodification,<sup>5</sup> dispossession and proletarianization. In the early 1980s, the rapid loss of livestock holdings and the famines caused by violent conflicts and droughts drove many Bokora families (one of the Karamojong group) living in central Karamoja to resettle in more fertile areas in the western and southern parts of the region. Bokora herdsman traditionally used these areas as dry season grazing rangelands (Dyson-Hudson, 1966), whereas they now house permanent settlements. The inhabitants of the village of Lojom, located in one of the most fertile areas of Karamoja near to the town of Iriiri,<sup>6</sup> are a living proof of the process of 'livestock dispossession', since most of them used to be herders in the past, while they now undertake a set of different economic activities as a means to secure their subsistence.

The extensive literature on pastoral sedentarization and diversification (see, for example: Brockington, 2001; Desta and Coppock, 2004; Fratkin, 2001, 2013; Little *et al.*, 2001, 1985; McCabe *et al.*, 2010; McCabe, 2003; McPeak and Little, 2005) illustrates important common trends in the historical transformation of pastoralist societies across the African continent – and especially among East African pastoralists – from nomadic and semi-nomadic to sedenterized and highly diversified. These studies describe a number of endogenous and exogenous factors – such as drought, conflict and famine – as driving many pastoralists to seek alternative means of social reproduction in order to preserve their food security, resource ownership and human security. In particular, over the past thirty years, these studies have analysed the costs and benefits of this transformation. The major benefits of sedentarization have been highlighted as: increased market opportunities, better access to health care and formal education, while disadvantages have been linked to increased impoverishment, worsening child nutrition and the decline in informal safety net systems (Desta and Coppock, 2004; Catley *et al.*, 2013; Fratkin, 2013). Other studies (such as those by Fratkin and Smith, 1995; Smith, 1998; Brockington, 2001; Livingstone and Ruhindi, 2013) have shown that many ex-pastoralists currently find themselves living in growing towns and trading centres, undertaking new and different economic activities. One of

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<sup>5</sup> What is meant by 'commodification' is: 'the process through which the elements of production and social reproduction are produced for, and obtained from, market exchange and subjected to its disciplines and compulsions (Bernstein, 2010: 102).

<sup>6</sup> It is possible to find different versions of Iriiri sometimes spelled as 'Iriiri' or 'Iriir'.

the outcomes of this recent urbanization has been the emergent role of women in the new domestic economy, where women are now often at the forefront of non-livestock activities, attesting the important nexus that runs between livelihood transformation and evolving gender relations (Wangui, 2014).

The research findings contained in the literature on pastoralism are also importantly reflected in the scholarly work produced over the past decade on Karamoja specifically. By seeking to identify and understand broader shifts in livelihoods, this literature has provided a livelihoods analytical framework which is useful to map out the ‘alternative livelihoods’ available to the Karamojong, following the loss for many of the traditional transhumant agro-pastoral mode of production (see, for instance, Burns *et al.*, 2013; Gelsdorf *et al.*, 2012; Scott-Villiers, 2012; Stites and Akabwai, 2010; Stites and Akabwai, 2009; Stites and Huisman, 2010; Stites *et al.*, 2007a). Most of these accounts point to the increasing impoverishment of the Karamojong, concluding that transhumant agro-pastoralism offered a better suited livelihood system for coping in arid and semi-arid lands, compared to the livelihood options currently available.

The other main source of research on Karamoja consists mainly in reports, assessments and project documents produced by aid agencies and NGOs working in the region. In such literature, the Karamojong are constantly portrayed as torn between coping, adapting, being food insecure, losing livelihoods and being seasonally in-need of relief due to crop failures. One will find that almost any food security assessment conducted in the region – especially over the past five years – is essentially an exercise of ‘copy and paste’ *ad nauseam*!<sup>7</sup> Before 2011, at least, the weekly bulletins on raiding activities and government led-disarmament operations forced the ‘analysts’ to take note of some differences.

Overall, the available literature on Karamoja is rich with ethnographies published between the 1950s and 1970s (such as those by: Gulliver, 1953, 1955; Dyson-Hudson, 1958, 1966; Lamphear, 1976), whereas over the past four decades only one monograph on traditional religion has been written (by Knighton, 2005). A number

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<sup>7</sup> Refer, for example, to the monthly updates from the Famine Early Warning System Network and to the yearly World Food Programme Food Security and Nutrition Assessment in collaboration with the Makerere University (see references section).

of articles have been written on conflict and disarmament (see, for example: Ocan, 1994, 1992; Gray 2000; Mirzeler and Young, 2000; Walker, 2002; Gray *et al.*, 2003; Knighton, 2003, 2010; Mkutu, 2006, 2008, 2010; Eaton, 2008a, 2008b, 2010; O’Keefe, 2010). This literature rightly emphasises the rapid changes caused by the proliferations of rifles in the region since the 1979 looting of the Moroto barracks, and it does not engage with the more structural roots of violence that began much earlier, even before the spread of rifles.

Interestingly, a different perspective is presented in the body of works conducted in the neighbouring Teso region, first by Vincent (1971, 1974, 1977, 1978, 1982) and later on by Jones (2005, 2007, 2009, 2013) and Kandel (2014, 2015, 2016). This literature can be drawn on for research on Karamoja to gain new theoretical insights as well as to access a different vocabulary that is less ‘developmental’ and policy oriented than that commonly used to discuss Karamoja. I have drawn on it also to trace what are sometimes subtle but important differences between the two regions’ economic development.

The historical formation of classes in Teso described by Vincent (1982) can be used comparatively to understand the formation of a local elite in Karamoja. The raise of ‘Big Men’ in the village of Gondo, illustrated by Vincent (1971), is another framework of reference for my case study, which also underlines the uneven path of progression between men and women in the local politics. The work of Jones (2009) illustrates both the Ugandan state’s lack of interest for the rural countryside and the local population’s general disengagement with both governmental and non-governmental policies, highlighting the prominence of other types of institutions in the region, such as Pentecostal churches and burial societies, and shows how these are sites of innovation. In my own study, I show that though the state is lacking in Karamoja in terms of services delivery, it still maintains great influence through aid agencies and NGOs, strongly impacting the ways development is taking place across generations. Kandel’s work focuses on ‘land dispossession’ and social differentiation - two key issues also in Karamoja, though as I explain in the course of the thesis, the current process of ‘dispossession’ in Karamoja is more related to livestock than land. My claim is that except for the mineral sites and the natural protected areas, ‘land dispossession’ in Karamoja might feature – if at all – as a widespread problem in the

future, given the semi-arid ecosystem of the region and its low land productivity for agriculture activities compared to the rest of Uganda.

While the literature on pastoralism and livelihoods has offered vital tools of analysis to understand both the transformations that have occurred in pastoral societies (including Karamoja) over time, as well as the complex combinations of livelihoods and activities, it offers less insight into the social dynamics of transformation and how diverging pathways are apparent for pastoralists – even those living in the same area. An example of such an analytical gap in the literature can be identified in the frequent descriptions of growing numbers of Karamojong engaged in casual labour activities as a ‘coping strategy’, without an investigation into *who* the labour providers are. The most recurring gap in the literature concerns precisely the relational aspect of labour dynamics, resulting in a picture where people’s activities, livelihoods and different levels of access to resources, are depicted without reference to their unequal relations to other people (as posited by Bernstein, 2010).

Both the literature on pastoralism, generally, and on Karamoja specifically, does not place the analysis of pastoralists’ and ex-pastoralists’ livelihoods in relation to wider processes of commodification and uneven labour dynamics (in the social division of labour). The effect is that of exaggerating pastoralist societies’ isolation and difference with respect to other rural societies in the country and in the continent. In sum, the literature on pastoral diversification has paid inadequate attention to internal social dynamics and inequalities as pastoral economies and livelihoods have undergone profound transformation and change.

The literature that does analyses such changes is the one on agrarian change, framing the wider processes of land and labour commodification as processes of ‘land dispossession’ and ‘de-peasantization’ and increasing social polarization/differentiation (such as in the work of Meillassoux 1972, 1973, 1981; Comaroff and Comaroff, 1997; Ellis, 1998; Bayres, 1999; Bernstein, 2010).

However, the limitations of applying the findings from the literature on agrarian change are that they do not address the question of what happens to transhumant agro-pastoralists once they are dispossessed of their livestock and sedentarised in the countryside. My argument is therefore that the analysis of the processes of ‘de-peasantization’ (or ‘de-agrarianization’) resulting from the

commodification of the local economy – and manifest in the substitution of farm with off-farm incomes, which has been highlighted in the agrarian change literature (Araghi, 1995, 2009; Bryceson, 1999, 2000; Bernstein, 2010) – when applied to Karamoja would greatly benefit from adding the concept of ‘de-pastoralisation’ – a concept that is currently *not* referred to neither in the literature on pastoralism nor in the literature on agrarian change.

Here, I refer to the topic of ‘livestock dispossession’ in particular, and to the consequential livelihood diversification and increased socio-economic differentiation. I use frameworks from agrarian change research comparatively in my analysis of the case of Lojom to speak about processes of ‘de-pastoralisation’ as the dispossession of the major means of social reproduction, which caused increasing economic diversification and social differentiation and resulted in the formation of different social classes. My argument is that the great famine of 1980 and the ‘forced pacification’ of the region in 2006 are two key events that have fostered the process of ‘de-pastoralisation’ of the Karamojong, especially amongst the Bokora. This has resulted in a growing proportion of families who derive their income from ‘marginal farming’,<sup>8</sup> off-farm activities and wage labour, as a consequence of ‘livestock dispossession’.

The present study thus addresses this analytic gap by bringing the literature on pastoralism into fruitful relation with the literature on agrarian change to argue that the current reality of many Karamojong not only concerns their status as ‘ex-pastoralists’ coping with a new environment but also their integration into a rural and dynamic agrarian society characterized by wage labour relations (both agricultural and non-agricultural) and processes of social differentiation across generations and between emerging towns surrounded by satellite villages inhabited by stockless/destitute workers.

The scholarly works on social differentiation in pre-colonial and pre-market economy societies in rural Africa can in general be divided according to two major narratives: those describing these societies as being more ‘egalitarian’ (Meillassoux, 1973), and those emphasizing that social differentiation has always existed (Iliffe,

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<sup>8</sup> Marginal farmers is a concept used to describe ‘farmers who do not provide the major part of their reproduction needs from “own account” farming’ (Bernstein, 2010: 126).

1987). Such opposing viewpoints are equally present in the literature on pastoralism, though currently the commonly accepted view is that customarily poor pastoralists in East Africa were generally 'sloughed off' by the pastoral economy, which functioned according to egalitarian groups but only amongst self-sufficient herders (*ibid.*). East African pastoralists are thus classified as traditionally relatively equal insofar as they belonged to the same social standing (Anderson and Broch-Due, 1999). While egalitarian claims on traditional pastoral societies are generally deemed as mythical and romanticised depictions of what traditional pastoralism 'should be' – rather than what it actually was – at the same time, any study produced on rural Africa will point to the fact that social differentiation is on the increase. A more cautious approach to the framing of traditional pastoral societies should thus orient itself somewhere between these two dichotomies: avoiding stereotypical and romanticised reinterpretation of history, while not obscuring the specific reality of each context which may present significant traits of egalitarianism that should not be denied.

Such a polarized debate also pervades the pastoral literature on gender relations. These relations have mainly been portrayed through a dominant narrative on patriarchal relations (Schneider, 1979; Spencer, 1979, 1998; Llewelyn-Davies, 1981), with minor accounts underlining more equal gender relations before colonial intervention, based on different gender roles within the economy (Dahl, 1987; Hodgson, 1999). However, this second narrative does not necessarily highlight men's political and economic exploitation of women, but only discusses different property rights over livestock. There is a small body of works on gender relations in Karamoja, namely those by Mkutu, 2008; Stites and Akabwai, 2010, which mainly point out the changing male roles in terms of production as a result of changes in livelihood. Presently, there is not a single work that investigates social differentiation and the presence of a class structure in Karamoja,<sup>9</sup> together with the ways in which other social differences and divisions such as gender, kinship and patronage combine and intersect.

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<sup>9</sup> Of the existing literature on Karamoja, only one 1988 source by Gartrell directly refers to social differentiation and class formation, and this reflection occupies the space of one paragraph. Gartrell actually underlines the gap in the existing literature of her time and expresses the need for more research on these two themes.

The literature on persistent crises such as chronic poverty and food insecurity (see, for instance, Keen, 1994; Macrae and Zwi, 1994; Duffield, 1994a, 1994b; De Waal, 1997; Bradbury, 1998; Schafer, 2002; Carter and Barret, 2006; Devereux, 2007; Alinovi *et al.*, 2008; Maxwell *et al.*, 2010) highlights the paradox of the apolitical nature of humanitarian and development frameworks in response to the highly political nature of chronic crises that these institutions are supposed to deal with. Given the combination of a chronic presence of the humanitarian industry in Karamoja since 1964 and the chronic food insecurity and poverty in the region, overcoming the humanitarian and development frameworks becomes paramount. For this reason class analysis is chosen as the key angle of investigation of the present study. A class analysis approach is better suited to reveal structures and processes that reproduce poverty and inequality in the region over time. Furthermore, it brings ‘power relations’ and ‘politics’ back at the centre of the investigation since both governmental, humanitarian and development discourses on the region tend to neglect these aspects altogether. My aim is to shift the typical discourse brought forth by the development industry in the region regarding poverty and food insecurity, to a discourse that is focused on inequality and its social organization over time.

For this reason, the analysis of class relations is at the centre of this study’s investigation into the causes and drivers of socio-economic differentiation in Lojom in relation to different patterns of production, accumulation, and social reproduction. As I explain in Chapter Two, livelihoods analysis is extremely useful in revealing the complex strategies by which a family secures its means of subsistence. At the same time, a livelihood analysis alone does not offer an explanation for the persistence of extreme poverty and food insecurity in the region. In other words, it does not shed light on the ‘invisible’ political and economic structures, processes and practices that have entrenched so many families in low food production and made them dependent on the market-based wage labour and relief aid only for simple reproduction.

In my analysis of class relations, I refer to Olin Wright’s definition of class as: ‘when some people have greater rights/powers with respect to specific kinds of productive resources (owning means of production or labour power) than do others’ (Wright, 2005: 10). As will become clearer in the course of the following pages, classes are not defined only in relation to who owns the means of production – thus entailing



an ‘objectivist approach’ (Carrier, 2012) – but through a set of material and immaterial concepts and understandings defined by the people themselves and thus in consideration of a ‘subjectivist approach’ (ibid.). However, my work is not on ‘class as identity’ as per the anthropological subjectivist approach (ibid.). I investigate social relations of production (or social differentiation) between and within families in everyday lives and their reproduction over time.

The overall aims of the present study are thus to investigate the causes and drivers of socio-economic differentiation in the village of Lojom and to explore the consequences and impacts of the changes in modes of production from a transhumant agro-pastoral system to a sedentarized and more differentiated livelihood system across different social classes and gender relations. To respond to the core question: ‘what are the causes and drivers of socio-economic differentiation in the village of Lojom?’, I employ four sub-questions of political economy, borrowing from the work of Henry Bernstein ‘Class Dynamics of Agrarian Change’ (2010: 22):

- I. Who owns what?
- II. Who does what?
- III. Who gets what?
- IV. What do they do with it?

I investigate these questions dynamically across generations and locations to respond to the other important question raised by Wright of ‘how should we characterize and explain the variations across history in the social organization of inequalities?’ (Wright, 2005: 189). According to Wright, the concept of ‘class dynamics’ is not the question but the answer to this question. A class analysis alone, however, does not capture other processes of differentiation across generations for which I develop a more complex analysis in the present study. While researchers recognize social differentiation across Africa – without agreeing on a single interpretive model for its analysis (Peters, 2004: 283) – I found a livelihoods analysis as the ideal starting point, followed by a class analysis and concluded by an ethnographic investigation. I think this analytical model is helpful to shed light on the different layers and dynamics that characterize social differentiation in rural Africa and showing the processes which underpin and reproduce differentiation over time. Ethnographic methods in the literature on anthropology of classes have been recognized as more appropriate to

investigate the formation of classes and its dynamics compared to more formal approaches based on positions and systems (Kalb, 2015: 15).

In Chapter Two I combine the wealth ranking exercise and the survey data with in-depth life history interviews. This enables me to show the emergence of class structures that go beyond the mere description of four wealth groups in one village. To investigate the existence of class structure in Lojom, I employ in-depth life history interviews, which prove invaluable effective in understanding pathways of family 'dispossession' and 'accumulation' and how the social organization of inequalities changed over time. Following the identification of social classes in a non-parametric way, I investigate the extent to which class relations also intersect with other social structures, such as 'kinship', 'patronage' and 'patriarchy'.

In Chapter Three I illustrate the socio-economic transformation of Karamoja throughout the twentieth century in relation to a history of external agencies of change. I rely on historical and ethnographic sources to illustrate the traditional socio-economic organization of Karamoja before the occurrence of major structural changes in the region. In the past, processes of 'accumulation' and 'dispossession' were extremely dynamic, and occurred without a formation of more permanent social classes. I show the ways in which both man-made factors (governments, aid agencies and churches) combined with natural factors (droughts and diseases) contributed to the 'de-pastoralisation' of one of the Karamojong groups, the Bokora, from transhumant agro-pastoralists to settled 'marginal farmers' and town-based workers.

In Chapter Four I analyse the outcomes of this historical process of socio-economic transformation through a case study of the village of Lojom, inhabited mainly by the Bokora. Here, through a wealth ranking exercise, I trace the existence of four social classes. It also 'sets the stage' for the analysis of the following chapters on the uneven social relations of production that explain the reasons why only few families presently are wealthy, whereas the majority are trapped in poverty.

In chapters Five to Nine I address the different causal factors of social differentiation in Lojom and their diverse impacts over time. In Chapter Five I present an in-depth analysis of the current functioning of the livestock economy in the area of Iriiri and Lojom and I investigate whether the possession of livestock is still a factor of social differentiation. In Chapter Six, I pose the same type of question with regards to

the agricultural production as to whether those families who harvest more are also the wealthiest and how they have been able to achieve larger yield compared to others.

In Chapter Seven I examine the importance of alternative means of social reproduction which are needed by most of the families to overcome both 'livestock dispossession' and the chronically low agricultural production in Lojom. In Chapter Eight I show the historical importance of the Catholic Church and the provision of formal education on social differentiation and class formation and the ways in which its contribution to differentiation has changed over time. In Chapter Nine I analyse recent state policies used to consolidate its reach in Karamoja and the need of the aid industry to assist the poor. I focus on the outcomes of these policies across the different social classes, thus highlighting opportunities and entrenching factors that explain the current situation of chronic poverty and food insecurity. In the final chapter I return to the question of social differentiation to investigate the relations between different types of family arrangements and different families' wealth levels, as well as the relations between different wealth levels among members of the same family across the different social classes, thus showing the presence of patriarchal relations of production between women and men.

## 2. Methodology

## 2.1 Historical sources on Karamoja

Borrowing from Bourdieu's notion that 'social world is accumulated history' (1986: 83), in the present thesis I argue that the current problems of chronic poverty and food insecurity in Karamoja are the outcomes of the cumulative events that have occurred in the region during the twentieth and twenty-first century. In order to accomplish what I deem to be a crucial historical reconstruction of socio-economic changes in Karamoja, I rely on archival and scholarly sources, oral testimonies by knowledgeable elders and Christian missionaries who have lived in the region since the 1970s. I also rely on the important ethnographies written about the region, especially during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. While some of these sources may be criticized for over-emphasizing pastoralists' resistance to modernization (McCabe, 1994) – and for predominantly focusing on male livestock owners while only portraying women as wives – they constitute a significant reference point for longitudinally situated comparisons between the past – or 'the traditional' – and the present.

For the purpose of this research, which begins in Chapter Three with the analysis from the so called 'traditional' Karamojong modes of production, accumulation, and reproduction, I have drawn on the following important works: Gulliver, 1953, 1955; Dyson-Hudson, 1958, 1966; Barber, 1962, 1968; Farina, 1965; Baker, 1967; Welch, 1969; Lamphear, 1976; Quam, 1976, 1978; Cisternino, 1979, 1985a, 1985b; Cisternino and Rowland, 1980; Novelli, 1980, 1999; Wilson, 1985, and Knighton, 1990. I have also drawn in direct e-mail correspondence and oral interviews conducted with Michael Dwight Quam, Calvin Welch and Ben Knighton. These are well established scholars that conducted research in Karamoja between the 1960s and 1980s, and their insights have been extremely important to better understand the several transformations that have occurred in the region since their time.

To map 'the history of socio-economic changes in Karamoja', which constitutes a central part of Chapter Three, I mainly draw on the work done by Barber, covering the early colonial period, and by Welch, covering the history of the colonial policies between 1948 and 1956, as well as the ethnographies of Gulliver, Dyson-Hudson and Lamphear. Dyson-Hudson's 1966 book in particular proved central to my own analysis, as he lived in Karamoja with his wife among the Pian – one of the Karimojong sections

– between January 1956 and September 1958. This is relevant because there are many similarities between the history of the Pian and the Bokora sections of the Karimojong, since they are the ones who migrated towards more fertile areas as a result of the great famine of 1980. In addition, particularly interesting for my analysis are two video documentaries shot by Joan and Alan Root, for the first time in the 1960s and then again in the 1980s, after the famine. The two documentaries show the significant transformations that occurred in Karamoja in the interval between the 1960s and the 1980s. Another important source I draw on is Dyson-Hudson's 1987 evaluation report on one of the first resettlement programmes in fertile areas implemented by OXFAM among the Dodoth, in the Kapedo sub-county (Kaabong district). This report shows the livelihoods consequences of the loss of animals amongst the Dodoth, and its findings are similar to what I found among the Bokora in Iriiri.

Following the literature review, I corroborate the analysis with archival work. In 2014 I was hired by the WFP Policy Unit in Rome to conduct a historical review of WFP operations in Uganda and Karamoja since 1964. This work allowed me to access WFP archives, both in Uganda and in Rome, and the project documents and government policies implemented in the country since 1964. Some of these documents have never been analysed before and I found no trace of them in the existing literature. I also access archival sources in Moroto Municipal Library in Karamoja, although at that time the library was almost dismantled and transformed in a temporary district office. A more interesting research site in Moroto town were the Italian Catholic missionary archives containing the research conducted by Bruno Novelli – a Catholic missionary who has dedicated more than twenty years studying the Karimojong's culture.

In Kampala, I also accessed the Makerere Institute for Social Research library, the Oxfam archives and the Combonian library, as well as the national and regional media archives at Centre for Basic Research. These were especially useful in accessing reports and scholarly works written by Ugandan researcher, which are not easily accessible from Western academic institutions.

During my fieldwork, local leaders in Iriiri Town Centre availed me with a written document containing a description of historical events concerning Karamoja. The document was the outcome of discussions between elders living in Iriiri. Although the document presents some inconsistencies with the 'official history', it represents

overall an important source of local knowledge. In particular, there are interesting references to natural events such as eclipses, droughts and floods. The thread linking all the events is the state and its interventions in the region over time. I found this document extremely useful in helping me fill the gaps in local history and as a potential source of information for further research with a stricter focus on Karamoja's history in particular.

Another important source of this dissertation are the oral testimonies given by elders and Christian missionaries, which I collected in the course of my fieldwork. In particular Father Marco in Mathany and Giuliano Consoli in Namalu have witnessed the history of Karamoja of the past forty years and participated in shaping the development of the region. As mentioned in the previous chapter, besides the Knighton's (2005) monographic study on religion, there are no recent studies that have attempted to reconstruct the more contemporary history of the region.<sup>10</sup> Chapter Three of this thesis provides one of the most comprehensive and systematic studies on the history of the socio-economic changes that have occurred among one of the Karimojong sections over the past century.

## 2.2 Qualitative work

I conducted the majority of the interviews in *Ngakarimojong*, some interviews in English and some in Italian, mainly with the Italian Catholic priests still working in the region and Italian NGO workers. I used one of my research assistants as the main interpreter, and recorded most of the interviews in order to have another native speaker double-check my translator's English version of the original interview.

At the beginning of my research I conducted several random group discussions in Iriiri centre that were interesting and useful to document local understandings of the history of Iriiri and Karamoja. I then spent the first months collecting oral testimonies of elderly people who first moved to Iriiri and asked them what the major changes were in the area since they settled there. The more I talked with people, the more I understood who would be my key informants during my research. Once I mapped out who were the knowledgeable informants, I conducted repeated semi-

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<sup>10</sup> Another less recent study that specifically focused on oral history was conducted by Lamphear in 1976. However, both Lamphear and Knighton refer only to the Jie history in North Karamoja.

structured interviews with them. I found this method to be the most useful tool to investigate sensitive topics such as politics, power relations and wealth. Group interviews were also conducted and used in the research, but they were more informal gatherings of people rather than organized discussions. Table 1.1 below shows a numeric summary of qualitative work conducted during the fieldwork, which entailed several meetings for each of the interviews indicated below (see also Appendix I).

Table 1.1: Summary of the qualitative work

|   |
|---|
| 15 interviews with knowledgeable regional informants in Kampala, UK, US and Italy |
| 10 interviews with regional leaders from Karamoja region                          |
| 12 group discussions with different people from Iriiri and Lojom                  |
| 10 interviews with local leaders from Iriiri and Lojom                            |
| 18 family and individual case study interviews from Iriiri and Lojom              |

Throughout most of the twenty-month period of fieldwork (from October 2012 to July 2014) I was based in Iriiri, hosted by Servizio Volontariato Internazionale (SVI), with sporadic travels to Kampala. Iriiri proved to be an ideal location to access people from the surrounding villages daily, either by car or by *picky* (motorbike), as well as to meet them in Iriiri centre outside of their context and in a more ‘spontaneous’ setting. For instance, I could meet people while they were selling firewood along Iriiri road or in the Catholic church opposite to the SVI guesthouse, while they went to pray on a Sunday, or to drink local beer (locally known as *kweete*) in the evening at William’s bar. The latter was one of the best locations and moments to discuss the more sensitive topics of my research.

Repeated informant interviews with local leaders proved paramount to reconstruct local history and discuss sensitive topics such as power and politics, while group discussions were useful for gathering contextual information, and to debate and understand general topics such as development programmes, the role and influences of the state locally and nationally. Overall, these interviews helped design the quantitative work (see ‘census survey’ discussed later in this chapter) and, later on, to set the theoretical explanation of the data collected through the surveys. Although quantitative and qualitative approaches vary considerably in how they contribute to knowledge – the former by measuring defined variables and generalizing results from a sample population, the latter through theoretical insights derived from case studies



or situational analyses – I found many examples where the two methods corroborated. For instance, the design of the statistical framework was both informed by, and the subsequent interpretation verified by, ethnographic study as well as follow up interviews.

Once back in London after the fieldwork, during the analysis of my data I conducted several follow up interviews. Besides the individual interviews conducted directly in Europe, all the other interviews conducted in Uganda and Karamoja after August 2014 were done through Skype, Facebook chats, blogs, e-mail and WhatsApp. These tools have been very useful for filling missing information and posing additional questions that arose while analysing the data. Though the fieldwork technically lasted twenty-months, I actually never stopped collecting data up until I submitted the PhD thesis in May 2016.

The Karamoja Development Forum on Facebook proved to be an interesting digital space in which to understand the current discourses on development in Karamoja. Many of the people contributing to the open forums are either former or current NGO workers, as well as local government officials. The Karamoja Development Forum on Facebook displays the opinions of a relatively young, dynamic Karamojong elite, which provide an interesting variation from the often polarized views of pro-government or anti-government advocates, with the latter often identified as synonymous to ‘pro-pastoralism’.

To summarize, the quantitative data worked as a medium between two moments of personal reflection and on-going discussion with knowledgeable informants. A comprehensive summary of the instruments and number of interviews conducted during the fieldwork are gathered at the end of the thesis in Appendix I.

### **2.3 Life history interviews**

In order to reconstruct the local history of Iriiri and Lojom and overcome the limits of the cross sectional census survey conducted in Lojom (see ‘census survey’ discussed later in this chapter), I asked questions related to the respondent’s life history in almost every interview. In particular, I used this type of methodology for the ‘18 family and individual case study’ interviews (see Table 2).

This part of the methodology was inspired both by the work of Camfield and Roelen (2012) as well as the Overseas Development Institute research team on Chronic Poverty. I found their tools to analyse life trajectories effective in providing understanding on pathways of family 'dispossession' and 'accumulation', and on how social organization of inequalities change over time. I therefore followed their approach and asked participants to identify key events in their lives. I started by inquiring about the formation of their families, then probed in what year the family was formed and the different key events across the time line were related to changes in family composition (birth of child, death in family, migration), employment (change of job, loss of job), health issues, disasters, among others. Most importantly, I asked each participant to indicate how their wealth evolved across the time line in reference to the key events they identified in advance. Finally, I discussed with the participants what caused the movements in wealth status. Overall, life history accounts informed my analysis on the causes of wealth dynamics over time, specifically in relation to different themes.

#### **2.4 Why a case study? And why Lojom?**

As a PhD researcher with financial constraints I had to limit my ambitions and I decided to concentrate my in-depth analysis on one village only. I thought that an extended case-study of one village only would be more theoretically significant than a variety of 'apt illustrations' (cf. Mitchell, 1983). Also, I found that a case study would help me better understand the 'structure of meaning' or 'social processes' that can eventually reveal broader socio-economic patterns existing in other villages in the Karamoja region (Ibid.). On the other hand, I acknowledge that my extended case study is not statistically representative of Karamoja and limited in time (cross-sectional). Still, its micro history allows to better understand emerging social processes - thus linking the plane of the local with that of the conceptual (Jones, 2009).

Once I completed the first part of the fieldwork in Iriiri, I had to find my case study. In particular, I had to decide which village in the area of Iriiri was suitable to tell the story of one group of the Karamojong who left transhumant agro-pastoralism to sedentarize and undertake different economic activities. I needed a village that was

among the oldest settlements in the area and that was not highly populated by Karamoja standards and which I could study given my limited financial resources. Given these conditions, I selected the village of Lojom as a case study for three major reasons: firstly, because of the presence there of families who were among the first to migrate to the area of Iriiri, secondly, because Lojom exemplifies elements that are typical of villages located in other green belts areas of Karamoja, and thirdly, because during the first months of fieldwork in Iriiri I met different people and made several friends who had familiar ties with Lojom. In particular, I became well acquainted with a few families who then became part of my in-depth case studies all throughout the thesis fieldwork (see Appendix I).

I sought to conduct research in one of the oldest villages in the area so that I could tell a more comprehensive story about the different patterns of migration over time. I also wanted a village that was ‘normal’, in the sense that Lojom is neither too remote nor too close to towns (located at 10km from Iriiri trading centre) and it is not properly a ‘project area.’ Notably, many families in Lojom – as in any other village in Karamoja – are beneficiaries of humanitarian or development projects. Many of these projects – such as the WFP’s food aid – target beneficiaries in almost every village in Karamoja, regardless of the village’s geographic location. The amount of humanitarian and development activities in Karamoja is such that it is hard to find one family that is not a beneficiary of some programme.

I approached Lojom village through informal group discussions with elders, in order to introduce myself and the study. This phase was useful to get a better sense of what life is like in the village and to get to know its particular history. I began by asking general questions such as: when the village formed, who were the original settlers and where they came from? These were ‘friendly’ topics that, other than generating important contextual information for my research, also helped respondents ‘open up’. As my fieldwork progressed, the focus on Lojom intensified even though the ‘relationship’ between Iriiri and Lojom remained the fundamental perspective throughout my entire fieldwork due to my interests in exploring the socio-economic interdependences between the two places.

## 2.5 Census survey

The representative household surveys available for Karamoja are often of questionable quality, due to the standardized definitions of households and their sizes, as well as the general relationship of distrust between the enumerator and the interviewee (see 'limitations and difficulties' discussed later in this chapter), which affect the overall reliability of the information collected. National statistics agencies such as the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), for instance, define one household as one wife plus children during census surveys.<sup>11</sup> With this type of definition, the complexity of a polygynous setting is distorted to say the least, if not completely lost, thus leading the analysis to portray a very different type of society. Furthermore, enumerators working for NGOs or UBOS in Karamoja often rush through the survey exercises due to the fact that they have to interview many households in a limited timeframe. In addition, they have no incentive to collect good quality data as they are paid according to the number of interviews conducted, which mostly results in a sort of 'box ticking exercise'. This approach by the enumerators was recently exacerbated by the growing use of powerful statistical software data analysis, such as STATA and SPSS among others, which create the opportunity for analysing an even larger population sample. This has in turn further pushed enumerators to collect more data as quickly as possible, ultimately leading to the prioritization of large sample size over the quality and depth of samples. As it will become clear throughout this thesis, people in Karamoja are highly sceptical when unknown enumerators ask them private questions, and they often do not provide reliable information without previously establishing a relationship of trust, which brings about what are generally called measurement errors (Meyer *et al.*, 2015). Finally, in the majority of cases only the villages along the main roads are sampled by these large surveys, while more remote villages are left out, leading to poor representativeness of the sample (Bardasi *et al.*, 2011).

Other than the limits and errors that can occur during the data collection process and during data analysis, two other major factors that negatively impact the quality of these types of household surveys are: firstly, the fact that only income or

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<sup>11</sup> Since the targeting exercise conducted in 2010 the WFP has also defined a household in Karamoja as comprising one wife plus six children. This resulted in the classification of households with more than six children as two separate households.

food consumption are the parameters used for defining ‘wealth’ and ‘poverty’ (see ‘wealth ranking’ in this chapter), and secondly, that ‘outliers’ are generally discarded from the analysis.

Following this *modus operandi* in Karamoja, the available quantitative data is unsuitable for any researcher who aims to collect socio-economic data without any preconceived definition of ‘household’ and ‘wealth’. It precludes the possibility of investigating what may appear to be data errors (e.g. ‘outliers’), and the unexpected growing inequality between families and, within families, between men and women.<sup>12</sup> In order to address my research question, I thus needed to collect locally sourced quantitative and qualitative data of a higher standard.

Towards the middle of 2013 my research assistants and I started to discuss with the people of Lojom our intention to develop a list of families living in Lojom. After two months of discussion, we were able to register 99 families in the roster (see definition of ‘family’ later in this chapter), plus all of the close relatives of the families both living in Lojom and elsewhere, and their current residences and places of birth. I then drew the first draft of the questionnaire from the important study on ‘Vulnerable Livelihoods in Somali region’ conducted by Stephen Devereux in 2006 (Devereux, 2006). I revised Devereux’s questionnaire keeping in mind the purpose of my research and the context of Lojom village. All the qualitative work undertaken at the beginning of my fieldwork helped to enrich and refine the design of the questionnaire. The choice of conducting the survey towards the end of my fieldwork aimed at earning the people of Lojom’s trust and therefore attaining more reliable information. After fourteen months of preparation and fieldwork (October 2012-December 2013), I developed a questionnaire which included the appropriate wording for asking relevant questions, both in English and *Ngakaramojong* (see Appendix VI). The questionnaire was designed in a way that made it a ‘sensitive tool’ able to collect a variety of information and enabling the possibility to differentiate the population of Lojom in terms of assets, a wide range of livelihood activities, food security, patterns of education, bridewealth payments, and affiliations to different religious organizations (see Table 1). The survey also included detailed questions on family histories, which

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<sup>12</sup> From now on I will use the term ‘family’ instead of ‘household’, which I define later in the chapter.

helped reconstruct patterns and reasons for migration as well as wealth dynamics over time.

Table 1: Summary of the questionnaire modules

- A. *Family profile*: family structure (monogamous/polygamous, male- or female-headed); relationship to the head of family; sex, age, formal education, residence and place of birth of each family member.
- B. *Demographics and culture*: length of time family has lived in the village, reasons for moving, planned movements in and out the village, religion, initiation, father initiation and generation set.
- C. *Assets*: type of asset and its location, number of assets owned at present and before the disarmament period, reason for reduction and/or method of acquisition. Specific questions on land titles and methods of acquisition.
- D. *Food Security*: meals per day (adults/children) during most recent hunger season.
- E. *Food consumption*: food items consumed in the last week, and source of each food item (production, purchase, food aid, gift and *leja-leja*).
- F. *Family livelihood activities*: undertaken by each family member in the last 12 months (from a list of 70 activities identified during fieldwork prior to the survey). Specifically, which member did the activity and what was the income earned.
- G. *Crop farming*: land ownership, access and rent; water sources/irrigation; use of fertilizer/manure; most recent harvest (crops grown, consumed, given for free and sold); list of major problems as farmers.
- H. *Livestock*: access to pasture, water, veterinary services and drugs; livestock owned (camels, cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys); parents' and grandparents' ownership; restocking; raiding; major problems as cattle keepers.
- I. *Informal transfers*: receipt of remittances, other material support from relatives/friends/neighbours in their residence; payment of dowry for each wife, year, quantity of animals, cash and debts; payment of *ekicul* for each child, year, quantity of animals, cash and debts.

- J. *Formal transfers*: assistance received from the government or aid agencies in the last 12 months (food aid, food/cash-for-work, seeds/tools, livestock, etc.); Self ranking of the most important type of assistance over time.
- K. *Coping strategies*: list of behavioural adjustments adopted to survive during livelihood shocks (e.g. drought and crop failure); self ranking of the most important institutions and people to rely on in the case of livelihood shocks; Reasons for out-migration.
- L. *Conflict and disputes*: family members who have been injured or lost their lives due to disarmament and raiding; family members who have been arrested/injured/killed due to disarmament; assets loss and recovery due to disarmament; engagement with local authorities (including elders) over different issues.

Throughout my fieldwork I was assisted by locally recruited research assistants who initially only helped with translations and eventually got trained in conducting the survey and collecting the data in Lojom village.<sup>13</sup> My team and I tested the questionnaire in similar villages and at the same time we explained to the local government and to the families living in the village the type of exercise that we were going to undertake.<sup>14</sup> During the testing we calculated that every interview took between one and two hours depending on the number of family members. Due to the fact that our the exercise was highly time-consuming for the interviewees, we offered salt and sugar in exchange for their time, as suggested at the meeting we held with village members to explain the exercise.

We always initially interviewed the main individual adult in the family, or the 'head' of the family, who provided proxy information for those family members who were not at home. In most cases during the interview several family members were present and the information that was provided to us was discussed and shared among

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<sup>13</sup> Research assistance was provided by Joshua Lomonyang, Akol Samuel Paul, Ben Lotukei and Francis Emong. All of them are Karamojong from the Bokora section, living in Iriiri trading center. They have all received formal education and two of them had worked for NGOs in the past.

<sup>14</sup> Interestingly, despite the fact that all the questionnaires were written both in the local language (*Ngakaramojong*) and in English, it was more difficult for the research assistants to read in *Ngakaramojong* rather than reading in English and then translating.

the family members. In the case of polygynous<sup>15</sup> families, information was cross checked between the husband and the wives, though it was not always possible to interview all of them and even less possible to interview all of them at the same time. We visited the same home several times to talk with those who were considered the most knowledgeable members of the family, and also to cross check the information with as many different family members as possible. The interviews were conducted in the local language *Ngakaramojong* with the heads of the families. When the family head was unavailable for the interview, we either postponed the interview until he or she was available, or we interviewed a close relative. Our bottom line criteria was that the person interviewed had to be in a position to be able to respond accurately on behalf of his/her entire family. For example, in the case of polygynous families, we always preferred to interview the husband (*ekile*), because he was in a better position to know the overall economic information (e.g. number of animals, total number of acres owned, *etcetera*) of his extended family. When interviewing the husband was not possible, we interviewed one of his wives, and whenever possible, questions related to assets were later confirmed with the husband as well. The same approach was used to confirm whether there were economic exchanges between wives and husbands. For example, after we interviewed a husband and he affirmed that he was financially supporting all of his wives, we then cross-checked the information with each of his wives as well. Beyond these general procedures, due to the particular context, interviews rarely took place with one respondent only. Most of the time several family members were present during interviews, discussing together what were the appropriate answers to each question.

The questionnaire was written both in English and in *Ngakaramojong*, and it referred to several key words in *Ngakaramojong* to recall critical events of the past (see Appendix VI). Most of the survey interviews took place between January and March 2014, during the dry season, as per the suggestion of the families of Lojom, according to whom during the dry season people are less busy in their gardens. Cross-checking interviews for filling survey data gaps and/or inconsistencies continued until the end of July 2014.

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<sup>15</sup> 'Polygynous' rather than 'polygamous' is the right term to define a society in which husbands may have more than one wife, whereas wives can marry one husband only.



## 2.6 Definition of ‘family’

As I briefly discussed in the previous section, one of the most challenging aspects of this research project was mapping out the village of Lojom in order to develop the families list.<sup>16</sup> In Lojom, as in many other villages in the region, there are different types of family arrangements, such as: male-headed (mono-nuclear), female-headed and polygynous families. Whereas mapping the mono-nuclear families was a relatively simple process, the other types of families required a lot of analysis and cross referencing. The existing relations among members belonging to polygynous families are highly diverse. In the past, all the wives belonging to a polygynous family lived in the same village, while presently they live in different villages. Therefore, I had to exclude a definition of family based exclusively on residence unit, as conceptualised by Guyer and Peters (1987). I thus decided, in unison with my informants – on a case-by-case basis and through in-depth interviews with husband, wives and relatives/neighbours – whether to identify a wife as female-family head or as part of a polygynous family. In other words, I had to distinguish between the *de facto* female headed families as opposed to *de jure* wives of polygynous families. This decision was made upon understanding the socio-economic exchanges that have occurred between the members of polygynous families, regardless of their geographic location or residence. As a result, I defined a polygynous family as such: all the wives and children plus the husband, between which existing socio-economic exchanges are in place. For socio-economic exchanges, I entailed that these family members sometimes meet each other – I defined differently those families whose members had not see each other for the past five years or more – and most importantly, that there exists some degree of ‘material’ exchange among the members such as: food, work, home/shelter, school fees, land, agricultural inputs and so on.

## 2.7 Wealth ranking exercise

There are different techniques to develop criteria to assess ‘wealth’ and ‘poverty’, and each technique is more or less appropriate depending on the particular context. The most common criteria used by economists to establish a wealth ranking of families are:

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<sup>16</sup> In Chapter Ten the economic relations between wives and husband, geographical location of wives, separation/divorced, *etcetera* will be extensively discussed.

income and food consumption. These criteria applied to define wealth and poverty especially among pastoralists obscure the existence of different wealth groups in these societies, leading to the portrayal of families as a single, homogenous group of extremely poor people (Broch-Due, 1999; Little *et al.*, 2008). Broadly, rural societies in Africa may be only marginally integrated in the modern cash economy, therefore, equating low cash expenditure or income with poverty can provide a misleading targeting exercise while overshadowing the existence of different wealth groups. Moreover, it is really hard to collect comprehensive and accurate data on food consumption and income. This clearly emerges from the analysis of my census where I tried to collect this types of information with alternative results (see ‘Limitations and difficulties’ section later in this chapter).

In absolute terms there is no single best criteria to establish a social stratification. Perhaps, the best approach is to identify context-specific criteria, although these criteria may not be comparable with other contexts. One of the participatory techniques I used to develop context-specific criteria was the wealth ranking method, a community-based targeting exercise which I used to define the terms ‘wealth’ and ‘poverty’ and to then stratify all the families of Lojom into different wealth groups (Grandin, 1988). I carried this out in coordination with the census survey and identified the inhabitants in what I categorized as the four wealth groups of: better off, middle, poor and very poor.<sup>17</sup> The combination of the census survey and the wealth ranking enabled my analysis to triangulate between the census data and the local understanding of family ranking in terms of wealth and welfare, thus generating further analysis into social differentiation.

Specifically, I conducted three separate meetings with the same group of ten people, comprising male elders, youths and women – both formally educated and not – all of which were residents of Lojom (see Appendix I). I asked the participants to define the terms ‘wealth’ and ‘poverty’ using their own terms and understanding. Subsequently, four wealth categories were defined using local terms, whereby participants established criteria for the different wealth groups and drew a map of the families living in Lojom. Together participants identified each family in the village as

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<sup>17</sup> This method was based on similar work done by Ian Scoones in 1995 within an agro-pastoral community in southern Zimbabwe (Scoones, 1995b).

belonging to one of the wealth groups. Some of the participants attending the meeting personally knew all the people in the village.<sup>18</sup>

## **2.8 Limitations and difficulties**

I found the wealth ranking method to be both extremely swift in accomplishing its goal as well ethical, for its being rooted at the grassroots level. On the other hand, I would not choose this participatory technique to stratify a sample unless substantial time has been spent in the research site. For my case study, I was confident to obtain reliable data due to my long presence in the field. I knew who the rich families were and who were the most destitute and marginalized families. Therefore, there was little room for the respondents to lie about their position in the wealth ranking.

With regards to the census survey, despite the fact that I spent much time introducing myself and the purpose of the study, many people in Lojom continued to believe that I was an aid worker. The situation slightly improved when I asked the head of the village (Adupinkal) to officially introduce me to the families living in Lojom and explain once again the purpose of my work.

I faced several challenges during the survey exercise, probably due to the effects of the extended presence of NGOs and other aid agencies in Karamoja. For example, during family-mapping exercises, most inhabitants of the village mistook my writing down of family member's names for a food aid beneficiaries targeting exercise. Women often cried and quarrelled when they realized they had been left out. My attempts at explaining that I was conducting academic research in the UK and not working for an aid agency were mostly in vain. What was paramount for the people of Lojom was to see their names on my lists. Interestingly, many demonstrated outstanding skills in exploiting targeting exercises procedures to their own benefit, such as faking the targeting criteria to become food aid beneficiaries (see Chapter Nine).

This state of affairs created a situation whereby young men and girls often presented themselves as heads of families in order to make sure they got on the list, since I was primarily interviewing heads of families. The same pattern occurred with

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<sup>18</sup> See Chapter Four for a full discussion of the wealth ranking exercise in Lojom.

married women who introduced themselves as the family heads. There were also cases whereby during the survey, people who were there probably just visiting friends in Lojom, pretended to be someone else with the aim/hope of becoming food aid beneficiaries.

After long discussions and much time spent in the village, I was able to address these issues to some degree, though I was continually struck by the level of distrust I encountered, as well as by Lojom's inhabitants' highly opportunistic behaviour towards any external actor or agency (see Chapter Nine). The fact that I offered small quantities of sugar and salt in exchange for an interview caused trouble in the process of completing the exercise. Unfortunately, there were other issues that I had to face during the survey. For example, the difficulty in attaining the exact number of animals owned by the families. One of the solutions developed to overcome this problem was to collect information about livestock holdings anytime. For instance when I met people from the village, or shepherds grazing their animals, I always asked about herds from Lojom and their owners. Sometime this strategy allowed me to start the interview for the census already knowing the number of animals that people possessed. Overall, this solution improved the quality of the data collected. Broadly, quantifying families' assets took a lot of time and in my case I found women generally less open compared to men in regards of discussing their assets ownership.

Furthermore, collecting the correct data in terms of food consumption, food exchange and food harvest proved to be a very challenging exercise. This was especially challenging when interviewing poor families because their local food measurement units consisted in either old WFP food aid sacks, plastic cups, USAID cooking oil cans, different types of jerry cans, making the conversion into kilogrammes extremely difficult.

Finally, following the recent end of the disarmament exercise and the fact that many of the people interviewed were former raiders, all names have been anonymised and only nicknames have been used (see Appendix I), with the exception of: my research assistants (mentioned in footnote 13); knowledgeable regional informants in Kampala, UK, US and Italy; regional leaders from Karamoja.

### **3. History of Socio-Economic Changes in Karamoja**

## Introduction

In order to fully understand the socio-economic changes that have occurred among the Karimojong, and the consequences of the process of 'de-pastoralisation', it is necessary to try to trace their traditional economic and social organization. This is a difficult task due to the scarcity of systematic written sources from the pre-colonial period, leaving the early ethnographies of the 1950s and 1960s as the 'first' scholarly sources on the region, which describe the economic and social organization of the Karimojong as mostly based on relations of inter-dependencies between different families and other groups. Though these ethnographies were conducted during the late colonial period, when major external interventions were just beginning in Karamoja, these provide an important source for the task of trying to reconstruct a realistic picture of what the traditional socio-economic system was like, especially since no substantial changes in terms of production, accumulation and social reproduction occurred during the first 40 years of colonialism (Barber, 1962; Dyson-Hudson, 1962). As illustrated in the next section, the early colonial regime's economic investment in the region was negligible, with the British administration adopting a policy of minimal interference with respect to the Karimojong's customs, during a period that is generally referred to as *Pax Britannica* (Gartrell, 1988).

This chapter illustrates the historical process of the Karamojong's 'de-pastoralisation', which has entailed the transformation of the modes of production from a transhumant agro-pastoral system to a sedentarized and more diversified socio-economic system. It focuses on the story of one Karamojong group in particular, the Bokora, that began a lengthy sedentarization process after the great famine of 1980. In particular, between the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, the Bokora were among the first Karamojong group to experience large 'livestock dispossession', due to warfare, famine and poverty. As a result, many Bokora families migrated to the south western part of the region, which was an area that was already traditionally well known to them as they used to graze their animals there during the dry season. At that time, the area was a relatively more secure place in which the resettled Bokora families had better chances of survival in comparison to central Karamoja.

Over time, different institutions have contributed to this transformation. From the late colonial policies in the beginning of the past century that aimed at sedentarizing the population, destocking their herds and alienating their land, to the violent Amin regime interventions of the 1970s and the political turmoil that followed, different processes have led to the preconditions that brought about a devastating famine in the region, in 1980. The period that followed the famine was marked by the increasing influence of Anglican and Catholic missionary activities, as well as permanent establishments of international humanitarian organizations in the region. Over the following two decades, these two actors acted as the state in Karamoja, and played a major role in encouraging the Bokora to change their semi-nomadic traditions in favour of sedentarization, and embrace new economic opportunities, such as formal education, health care, famine relief, and agricultural growth. The historical analysis in this chapter ends with the more recent state interventions that, through disarmament programmes, fully incorporated the region into the rest of the country, 'imposing' a new economic production system on the people living there. The village of Lojom, one of the many villages around the Iriiri sub-county, is a perfect example of this history in which families who used to be transhumant agro-pastoralists until the 1980s, became settled 'marginal farmers' and town-based workers.

### 3.1 Traditional<sup>19</sup> Karimojong Socio-Economic Life

#### 3.1.1 Historical background

The history of the origins of the Karimojong is highly contested.<sup>20</sup> Following different historiographical methods, either based on oral testimony or language tracing, historians have posited two major hypothesis about the Karimojong's origins, locating them either in the East, in Turkana, or in the West, in Lango (Lamphear, 1976: 14-15). The people of Karamoja are ethnically categorized as both as Nilo-Hamites and as Nilotic or Central Paraniotic (ibid.). They are described as sharing (or having shared) the 'cattle complex' (cf. Herskovits in 1926) of much of eastern Africa. Though their origins are contested, what is not disputed is that the last location that the Karimojong inhabited together as one people before breaking off into different sections was a relatively small territory around the Apulè River, an area located in present day central Karamoja (Gulliver, 1953). Over the last century, the Karimojong left the area of Apulè and separated into different territorial sections<sup>21</sup> among which the major three were: Matheniko, Bokora and Pian.<sup>22</sup> As is often the case among African pastoral communities, the causes of this separation can be found in a human and cattle demographic increment that resulted in territorial expansion.

The outcome of this 'diaspora' was that the territorial extension of the Karimojong slightly increased, with the Matheniko section settling at the slope of Mount Moroto, the Pian section settling near the Omanimam river, and the Bokora section settling between what are now the Lotome and Kangole counties (Novelli, 1988). Despite these territorial divisions, the three major Karimojong sections shared the same language, modes of production, religion and environment. However, they competed with one another for limited natural resources. Map 1 shows the Karimojong herds' dry season grazing movements in 1940, according to Dyson-Hudson.

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<sup>19</sup> 'Traditional' is used here to refer to Karamoja before major socio-economic changes were induced by external actors. See Chapter Two for more information on the use of the term 'traditional'.

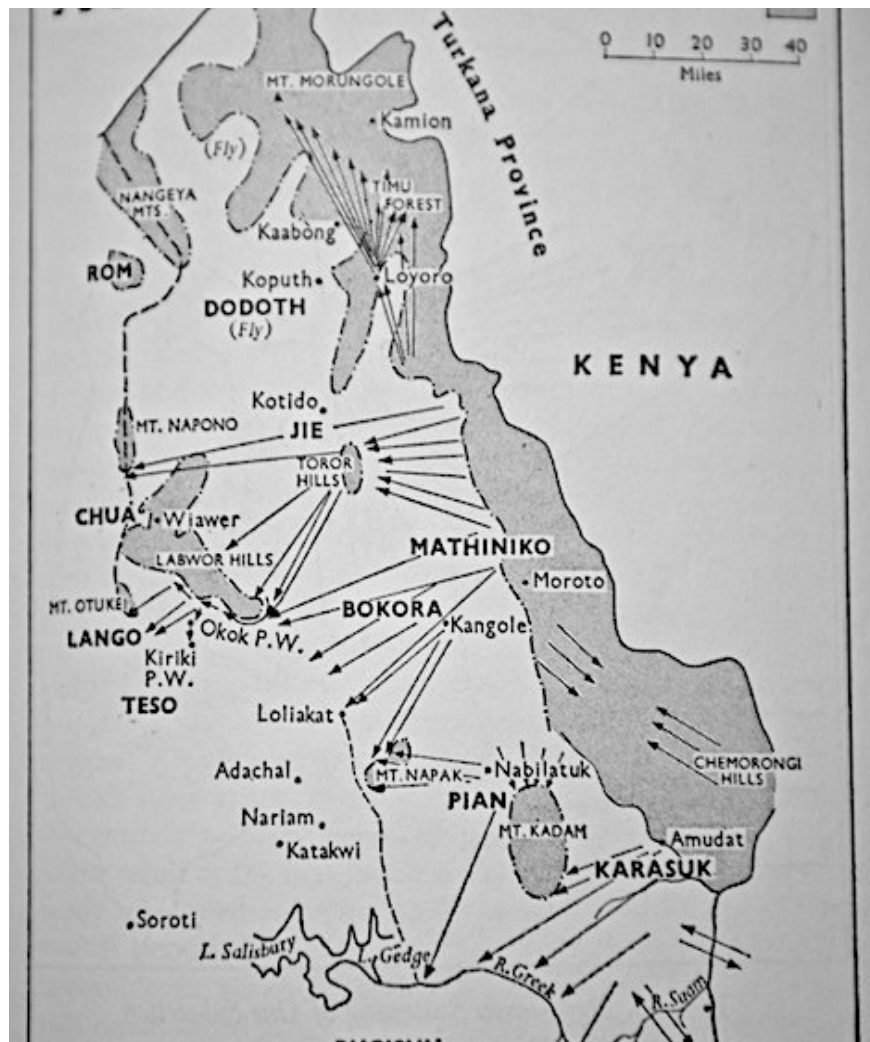
<sup>20</sup> There are no secondary sources before 1899 (Knighton, 2005).

<sup>21</sup> '[...] section was the most inclusive unit of affiliation for any Karimojong person' (Dyson-Hudson, 1966: 126).

<sup>22</sup> The British colonial Administration was the only one that acknowledged these three territorial sections (Novelli, 1988).



### Map 1: Herds' dry season grazing movements in 1940



Source: Dyson-Hudson, 1966: 61

Throughout the last century, probably up until the 1950s, the Karimojong still occupied the area of central Karamoja. This part of the region was largely semi-arid, with unpredictable rainfall patterns and an unbalanced distribution of rain over space and time. Climate uncertainty, the threat of enemy raids, and recurrent epidemics (affecting both humans and animals) have historically always been among the major hazards for the Karimojong's survival (Dyson-Hudson, 1966). Despite the harshness of their environment, the population survived mainly through a mixed economy<sup>23</sup> based on animal husbandry and sorghum cultivation (with a strong emphasis on the former), harvesting of wild fruits and hunting of wild animals (ibid.). This complex production system worked through three main elements: the possession and seasonal movement

<sup>23</sup> Similarly, Gulliver (1955: 2) describes the economy of the Jie in North Karamoja as a ‘mixed economy of millet farming and animal husbandry, the latter operated under a system of transhumance.’

of large herds to specific, different grazing sites; a clear gender-based division of labour; and large alliances based on both extended kinship and friendship relations (Gulliver 1955; Dyson-Hudson, 1966).

Due to the unpredictability of the environment and in order to maximize production and consumption, the Karimojong had to move their herds seasonally (Quam, 1978). This productive strategy is called transhumance<sup>24</sup> and through it herdsman were able to efficiently exploit the fluctuations in the availability of natural resources over two seasons: the rainy season (*akiporo*), usually between April and September, and the dry season (*akamu*), beginning in October through to March (Novelli, 1988). As long as water and grazing sites were available within these two seasons, herdsman lived between permanent settlements (*ngireria*: s. *ere*) and livestock temporary camps (*ngaiyoi*: s. *awi*) during the dry season.

Usually, between October and March, herdsman would slowly move with their animals from the permanent settlements in central Karamoja to the relatively more fertile areas in the southern and western parts of the region, establishing temporary camps near grazing sites. Depending on the harshness of the dry season, these grazing sites would be more or less distant from the permanent settlements, sometimes reaching to other regions currently known as Acholi, Lango and Teso. The seasonal movement of herds improved the capacity of the Karimojong's pastoral system to maximise livestock productivity because it enabled herders to improve their access to the best grazing sites and water sources throughout the year. This high mobility among the Karimojong also helped prevent the concentration of livestock over long periods in any one area, thus reducing the ecological damage and allowing the vegetation to regenerate for the next dry season.

By contrast, Karimojong women resided in permanent settlements in central Karamoja throughout the year, together with the elderly and children.<sup>25</sup> They were responsible for building the homesteads, cultivating sorghum, tending small ruminants,

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<sup>24</sup> 'Transhumant pastoralists' are also defined as those who regularly move back and forth between relatively fixed locations (IFAD, 2009).

<sup>25</sup> Interestingly, the Jie, in pre-colonial time, used to move the entire population with the animals during the dry season, but due to military authorities that prohibited their usual long distance movements, they resumed to the dual gender-based system (permanent settlement *vis à vis* stock camp) described above (Gulliver, 1955). It is unclear on whether this has equally happened among other Karamojong groups.

and tending to daily domestic work, such as firewood collection, local brewing, and fetching water (Gulliver, 1955; Dyson-Hudson, 1966; Lamphear, 1976; Novelli, 1988). While agricultural activities were women's responsibilities, with women deciding when and where to plant and how to distribute and invest agriculture produce (ibid.), farming and wage-labour were considered activities that were not fit for men.<sup>26</sup>

These intra-household dynamics reveal the broad complexity of the different means of social reproduction among the Karimojong, whereby men were more mobile and involved in livestock keeping, while women were sedentary and undertook different domestic and farming activities, so that while [...] 'the husband's word is law in regard to stock, a wife has the last word concerning gardening and garden produce' (Gulliver, 1955: 61). According to a Jie proverb captured by Gulliver (1955): 'sorghum was women's wealth while cattle was men's wealth.' It appears that in the 1960s the average land cultivated was one acre per wife, of which 90 per cent was sorghum (Quam, 1978).

In terms of land tenure, land was communal and garden rights (locally known as *emanikwor*) were achieved through settlement and clearing, and the transfer of cultivated land was negotiated by men settlements. Rights in garden land were phrased in terms of women (Dyson-Hudson, 1966), and the rights of usufruct of land pertained to women and were passed through matrilineal lines (mothers-daughters) (Gulliver, 1955; Dyson-Hudson, 1966). Once daughters married, they left their garden (*ngamanat s. amana*) rights to the wives of their brothers (Dyson-Hudson, 1958).

The traditional modes of production show a clear social division of labour within families, with each activity being complementary towards the maximization of production and exchange.

The next section will discuss how production, accumulation and social reproduction were organized across families and kinship connections.

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<sup>26</sup> The gender division of labour was fairly stark until the ox-plough was introduced in Karamoja in the 1940s (Dyson-Hudson, 1966). Slowly after that, a small number of men, especially the poor, began to cultivate the land (Gartrell, 1988). As we will see at the end of the chapter, the introduction of the ox-plough in Karamoja received a further push by the Catholic Church's activities in the wet areas, from the 1980s onwards.

### 3.1.2 Economy: production, accumulation and social reproduction

Despite the fact that the Karimojong are agro-pastoralists, possession of livestock – and cattle in particular – was the main source of subsistence and accumulation of wealth, and was also central to the religious and cultural reproduction of the society, especially for men (Dyson-Hudson, 1966; Lamphear, 1976; Gartrell, 1988). The final aim of every Karimojong man was in fact to accumulate enough cattle to guarantee the best life for his ‘extended family’,<sup>27</sup> over three generations (Dyson-Hudson, 1966).

The most stable and efficient herding arrangement in Karimojong eyes is represented by a considerable herd of livestock, substantial enough to support an extended family of three generations’ depth, the members of which in turn are able to provide the labour requisite for the proper maintenance of the herd under all conditions. [...] This is the Karimojong pastoral ideal which all men pursue, and which confers prestige on those fortunate enough to attain it. (Dyson-Hudson, 1966: 67-68)

Considering the fact that pre-colonial African agricultural societies are often portrayed as pre-capitalist (Meillassoux, 1973), it is interesting to find that instead, among the Karimojong, cattle always had both use-value and exchange-value, and wealth was attributed to those who possessed more animals, which resulted in the desire for accumulation (Quam, 1978).<sup>28</sup> As a result, the acquisition and the different levels of possession of cattle were key factors that determined the social stratification of the society (see Chapter Five). Similarly, Comaroff and Comaroff (1991: 34-35) have characterized several other traditional African pastoral societies where ‘beasts were like commodities’ associating cattle with wealth and power.

In Karamoja, in terms of use-value, cattle were rarely killed for food, whereas cattle’s yield was fully exploited. While blood and milk were consumed on a daily basis, animals were only killed during public ceremonies and other important social, cultural and religious events, and they were only sold to the neighbouring, more agricultural ethnic groups such as the Iteso, Lango and Acholi, only as an extreme measure to buy food during periods of shortages (Novelli, 1980). Outside of ceremonies and rituals, killing an animal was often a sign of poverty (Gulliver, 1955) and the accumulation of

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<sup>27</sup> Usually, the ‘extended family’ is the widest agnatic kinship connection, that is the grandfather of the family with all his wives and relatives including unmarried girls, married sons with their wives, and children (Gulliver, 1955).

<sup>28</sup> ‘Cattle are used by the Karimojong primarily as wealth. Ownership is individual, although households operate as an enterprise managing a composite herd’ (Quam, 1978: 50).

livestock worked as a savings system, with the exchange value of livestock guaranteeing food access. In addition, the fact that livestock possesses an intrinsic capacity for growth (Dahl, 1987) made the traditional Karimojong economy both a capital (exchange-value and growth) and subsistence-oriented economy (use-value). As pointed out by Quam (1976),

Through various strategies of exchange, the herdsman seeks not simply to meet his nutritional needs, but to increase his holdings [...] to create wealth. This wealth in livestock may then in turn be used as savings, as investment capital, or as currency for increased consumption. (Quam, 1976: 74)

The major strategies to both accumulate wealth and increase families' consumption, and therefore their means of subsistence, were: family alliances, skilful breeding management, different types of herding associations, and raiding.

One of the first pillars of the traditional Karimojong economy was based on creating family alliances with the twofold goal of increasing livestock possession and maximizing animal welfare. This was essential due to the particular feature of the economy that required any herder to constantly attempt to optimize his means of production – quantity of labour, power and size of herd owned –, to the extent that alliances between families followed the principle of '[...] combination of families with several sons and relatively few cattle with families having sufficient cattle but few sons' (Dyson-Hudson, 1966: 68). Marriage was the key strategy to control these factors and will be extensively discussed in the next section. From a production standpoint, a family with a large herd size but few sons resulted in difficulties to graze the herds. In this scenario, a herdsman would consider marrying another woman (*aberu*<sup>29</sup>), thus re-establishing an equilibrium between labour power and herd size. On the other hand, a scenario of a family with a small herd size and many sons meant that the herd could not provide the minimum yield for the family, especially during the dry season. Any herder had to consider these variables, which would inform his future decisions, and the right herd owner decisions guaranteed the best human and animal welfare.

The second economic pillar that contributed to the prosperity of any family in the region was based on the herders' skilful breeding management. The ability of

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<sup>29</sup> In *Ngakarimojong* the word for woman and wife is synonymous.

herders to manipulate the animals in a way that increased both their natural development and their yield, were strategies that could determine different levels of subsistence and slow accumulation of capital for any family. Some of the strategies were: firstly, creating a composite herd made of different cattle species, diversified in age and sex; secondly, guaranteeing the herd access to the best water and grass all year round through appropriate grazing patterns, thus improving the animals' diet and health conditions and ultimately increasing the yield; and lastly, undertaking a proper exchange of animals among herd-owners to achieve the latter (Dyson-Hudson, 1966).

This last aspect introduces the third economic pillar, which was based on forming different types of herding associations to control the three major means for production capital, labour power and land (including grazing, water and garden areas), thus achieving the maximization of production and consumption (Quam, 1978).

As will be illustrated in the next section, herding associations consisted of, specific and different types of exchange relations, mainly based on cattle kin, formal friendship, and patron-client relations. These three types of herding associations were important for several reasons: firstly, they allowed the herd to spread across different cattle camps, thus reducing the risk of losing the entire herd in the case of raiding or disease (Gulliver, 1955); secondly, they allowed for the optimization of the quantity of shepherds in relation to the size of the herd; thirdly, they favoured exchange within cattle camps, thus increasing natural development; and lastly, they created the conditions to always have someone who could lend some animals in case of need (ibid.).

The last economic pillar of the traditional Karamojong economy was raiding, which played an important economic role, both as wealth accumulation in the form of restocking, and as a means of subsistence, which led to asset and wealth distribution.

Despite particular strategies that were put in place to offset the risk of raiding, for wealthy herders, raiding was always an obstacle to keeping large herds for an extended period of time. At the same time, wealthy herders were the ones who had most likely undertaken successful raiding in the past (Dyson-Hudson, 1966). Raiding thus guaranteed some degree of vertical social mobility among both poor and wealthy herders. In particular, raiding was carried out against herders with large herds by

enemy groups seeking to increase the size of their own herds to pay bridewealth or to restock. As Quam (1976) suggests,

[...] raiding can be seen as a transfer event between enemy production units for the purpose of acquiring capital to invest in the productive process in order to implement or advance a strategy of economic growth. (Quam, 1976: 79)

The reasons for raiding included gaining cultural prestige within the community, restocking from livestock losses (due to previous raids, drought, or disease), and/or expanding access to water points and grazing areas, especially during the dry season when raiding was conducted against non Karimojong groups (Dyson-Hudson, 1966). The unintentional consequence of raiding was to redistribute the animals from areas in which they were more highly concentrated to areas in which they were less concentrated, which was also an important factor in rebalancing the exploitation of natural resources and allowing the areas that had been over exploited to regenerate.

These four economic strategies (family alliances, skilful breeding management, herding associations, and raiding) – which aim at herders' subsistence and accumulation of wealth – indirectly contributed to building a society with a relatively even distribution of cattle and natural resources between different Karimojong herd-owners (Ocan, 1992; Gray, 2000). The substantial egalitarian feature of the traditional Karimojong economy was neither intentional nor part of the ideology of the people (Dahl, 1979; Dyson-Hudson, 1980); it simply occurred due to the ways in which means of production interlinked with each other and with the ultimate aim of maximizing production and consumption, increasing the chances of survival in a highly dynamic environment.

Due to the high risks of becoming impoverished by raiding, droughts and diseases, there were some stockless families present in the region. Ex-herders who had been 'pushed out' from the pastoral economy had serious difficulties in restocking their initial capital. However, as Dyson-Hudson (1966) has pointed out,

It can in general be stated that although cattle-less families (or families extremely poor in cattle)<sup>30</sup> and very large herds exist among the Karimojong, they are infrequent and impermanent. (Dyson-Hudson, 1966: 49)

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<sup>30</sup> According to Dyson-Hudson (1966: 49) very poor pastoralists are: 'Usually the victims of enemy raids or stock disease of an epidemic kind.'

The chances of stockless families surviving were based on their abilities to restock and return to self-sufficiency. In the ethnographies of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s (Gulliver, 1955; Dyson-Hudson, 1966; Quam, 1976) stockless families in Karamoja were described as ‘infrequent and impermanent’ because they were either able to restock or they died, and there were ways for poor or stockless herders to restock and eventually return to the pastoral economy.

### 3.1.3 Social organization

As for many other cattle-keeping people in East Africa (Herskovits, 1926b), in Karamoja, traditionally, livestock was the ‘glue’ that bound people together, cementing important social ties both in terms of kinships and friendships (Dyson-Hudson, 1958). Kinship relations were mainly maintained through the payment of bridewealth, which was the most important exchange system among the Karimojong that was used to form alliances across families and other pastoral groups, and consisted in the exchange of cattle. Friendships were ‘quasi kin’ relations, based on high levels of mutual respect (Dyson-Hudson, 1966).

In Karamoja, marriage was only possible through the payment of bridewealth, with livestock and a new family established as a result of this transfer (ibid.). The payment was not only aimed at ‘gratifying’ the bride – as the higher the payment the prouder the bride – but also at gratifying the whole family, with the amount of animals to be paid varying according to the extension of the bride’s kin. Bridewealth was paid by the groom to the bride’s entire sub-clan (that is, all of the bride’s close relatives), and at least one animal for each family member (kinsman) had to be provided. This explains why the amount of animals paid for bridewealth could be quite large, and poor grooms could only marry brides with few relatives (small range of kin) (Welch, 1969). This system also explains the importance for any man to have access to a wide range of social relations through herding associations, such as ‘friendship-bonds’ (Dyson-Hudson, 1966) or ‘stock-associates’<sup>31</sup> (Gulliver, 1955). These were relied upon

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<sup>31</sup> Gulliver (1955: 197-199) used the term *ngitungakan* for ‘stock-associates’ defining them as a forms of cooperation and mutual insurance.



for contributions to bridewealth, since usually only half of the bridewealth could come from the groom's own herd (ibid.).

The whole system thus functioned as a cycle of family development, where those grooms who could afford to marry brides with many relatives had access to larger social networks or 'cattle kin' (*ngiyenet a ngaatuk*). As Dyson-Hudson points out: '[...] a man wants to marry a girl with as many kinsmen as he can afford so that he will have as large a family as possible' (Dyson-Hudson, 1970: 121). Wealthy herdsmen preferred to marry women with as many relatives as possible to increase both their cattle kin ties and their social status within the community.<sup>32</sup> Having access to large cattle kin was a fundamental support strategy in times of need, and also a strategy for the payment of bridewealth for marrying an additional bride. Wealthy herdsmen also knew that, at any moment, their large herds could be decimated by raids or diseases and because of this they needed help from their cattle kin, friendship connections or 'stock-associates' to rebuild their herd. As Gulliver (1955) has pointed out,

[...] a particular kind of inter-personal relationship is consciously translated into the right to seek stock in times of need, and the corresponding obligations to give stock in times of others' needs. (Gulliver, 1955: 3)

Through the payment of bridewealth, social kinship and 'property relationships' (Gulliver, 1955) were established among affine and friends, creating opportunities for stockless herders to eventually restock. Within this context, family composition counted a great deal. Male family members benefited greatly from their female relatives' bridewealth, since, as described above, bridewealth was paid to all of the bride's kin, who could then use the bridewealth for their own marriages or for restocking their herds (Dyson-Hudson, 1966). On the contrary, stockless male herders with mainly male relatives were almost condemned to subordination in the relations of production, providing herding labour to others' herds, with little or no chance of establishing their own families unless they went raiding. In their favour, families with many male herders had higher chances to succeed in a raid than families with many female members.

Raiding was not only a survival or restocking strategy, and a form of 'primitive accumulation', it also served as an important opportunity for interaction with

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<sup>32</sup> Men can marry more than one wife and monogamy is not part of the traditional Karimojong culture.

neighbouring hostile pastoral groups. Customary among the Karimojong was the depredation of non-Karimojong stocks (Dyson-Hudson, 1966). Killing enemies (of any age or sex) and seizing their cattle was considered a legitimate action and a way to protect and improve the Karimojong life.<sup>33</sup> The historical Karimojong enemies were – among others – the Turkana, Jie and Pokot (Dyson-Hudson, 1958) and these ethnic groups were cattle raiders as well, who also acquired wealth, control over territory and resources, and enhanced social prestige and leadership, through acts of raiding. As Baker (1967) has pointed out,

Raiding is regarded as a perfectly respectable social practice and there are considerable pressures for people to take part in, rather than avoid or prevent raids. Prestige is enhanced considerably after active participation in a successful raid. (Baker, 1967: 28)

On the contrary, similar actions of raiding were condemned and punished if they were persecuted against other Karimojong sections and kin groups. As Dyson-Hudson (1958) found,

It is forbidden to steal cattle of other Karimojong;  
It is forbidden to fight other Karimojong with spears.  
(Dyson-Hudson, 1958: 10)

This social system based on an endless cycle of accumulation of social relations (kin, friends and stock-associates) through the accumulation of cattle, acquired in turn through the accumulation of relations, resulted in the redistribution of cattle within and across Karimojong families in two different ways. Marriage with multiple wives and bridewealth allowed for the original herd to be shared among many family members, and created alliances between families with different levels of wealth. The system also created alliances across Karimojong sections and other sub-ethnic groups that were based on 'property relationships'.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> In *Ngakaramojong* language the word for 'enemies' and 'foreigners' are synonymous (Novelli, 1988).

<sup>34</sup> Stock-associates are not only people next to kin, but can also be formed among friends living in different territorial sections. These social relations are called 'bond-friends' (Gulliver, 1955).

## 3.2 The Time of State Building: 1912-1979

### 3.2.1 Early Colonial polices: 1912-1948

The first British contact with the Karamojong occurred in 1897, through white adventurers and foreign ivory merchants (Dyson-Hudson, 1958; Barber, 1962), during what Gartrell calls the period of 'pre-colonial imperial penetration' (cf. Gartrell, 1988).<sup>35</sup> In the decade that followed, the colonial regime showed little interest in the administration of Karamoja. A new interest emerged in 1912 (Dyson-Hudson, 1958), when the British military occupation entered the region, which was the last part of Uganda to be colonized (Mamdani, 1982). The year 1921 saw the colonial government change its policy in Karamoja from military occupation to civil administration (Barber, 1962), but this shift constituted little significant changes to the people living in the region. This is clearly attested by the fact that only two permanent British colonial administrators were appointed to the region (ibid.).

The first British colonial development plan for Karamoja intended to subdue the local population through forced sedentarization and animal destocking (Gray, 2000). Theoretically, once achieved, the purpose of the plan was to establish a system of governance with controlled boundaries and collection of taxes (Welch, 1969), which was the same governance model that was adopted in the rest of Uganda, and consisted in 'the hierarchical chiefs system' that was borrowed from the *Kiganda* type of governance (ibid.). While amongst the Baganda in central Uganda the chiefs system was part of the indigenous structure, in Karamoja this structure was forcefully imposed (Barber, 1962). The plan resulted in the establishment of seven administrative counties in the Province, with each county having its own chief, sub-chief and policeman (Dyson-Hudson, 1958).

In 1923 colonial administration began tax collection in Karamoja, which fit poorly with the Karamojong semi-nomadic lifestyle, and required the central government to impose restrictions on people's movements with their herds (Dyson-Hudson, 1958; 1966). The colonial rule also required male population to be available in the Province for forced public work throughout the year, and infringements on this

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<sup>35</sup> The description of the pre-colonial time continues in section 3.2.3 'History of armament'.

policy were punished with the payment of a heavy fine in terms of cattle, which also worked as a destocking mechanism (Dyson-Hudson, 1966). During the same year (1923),<sup>36</sup> in the southern part of Karamoja, Nabilatuk, this 'unpopular law' caused the reprisal of the Pian sections of the Karimojong, who killed the appointed chief, Achia. Achia allowed herders to graze their animals only under his official permission (Dyson-Hudson, 1966; Barber, 1968). When he discovered that some herders had left Nabilatuk to graze their animals without his permission and causing a reduction in male labour for work in the District, he seized several Pian cattle and sheep (*ibid.*).

The colonial regime in Uganda was also concerned with avoiding conflicts between Kenya and Uganda (Dyson-Hudson, 1958). For this reason, the increasing demands for grazing land from the Kenyan Pokot were satisfied, and in 1927 some of the traditional dry season grazing reserves used by the Karimojong were temporarily transferred by the colonial regime to the neighbouring Kenyan Pokot, as well as to other neighbouring Ugandan ethnic groups, such as the Iteso and Lango (Dyson-Hudson, 1958; Novelli, 1988). In Welch's (1969) descriptions of that time we find that,

Large areas of Karamoja District land were ceded to the Suk [Pokot] from Kenya. [...] it resulted in about 15% of the tribal grazing land of the Karimojong being closed to them. Furthermore, traditional grazing land to the North and West was ceded to Lango and Teso districts and the border closed [...]. (Welch, 1969: 83)

This redistribution of grazing land by the colonial regime highly deteriorated the relations between the Karimojong (the Pian section in particular) and the Pokot, as well as between the Karimojong and the Iteso (Dyson-Hudson, 1958).

However, colonial policies were not always effective. The Karimojong, as other pastoral societies in eastern Africa, were difficult to administer by any external bureaucracy, and government administrators lacked the resources, both in terms of funds and personnel, to fully implement policy measures (Barber, 1962; Dyson-Hudson, 1962). An example of this can be found in the Karimojong's continual use of traditional grazing routes in the absence of border controls.

In the following decades, the colonial administrators in the Karamoja District remained undecided regarding the implementation of two opposite policies: keeping

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<sup>36</sup> Alternative date 1921 (Dyson-Hudson, 1958).

the district quiet and peaceful with no development and maintaining 'law and order', or integrating the region into the rest of the country through rapid development (Barber, 1962; 1968). Until the end of the Second World War the first policy was the one that was implemented on a kind of 'maintenance basis' (Dyson-Hudson, 1958). The colonial regime understood that 'the civilising influence of taxation could not be routinized at a reasonable cost', and it was decided that 'the Karimojong were best left to themselves', and 'the area was declared a closed district, requiring a parsimoniously issued permit to enter' (Cisternino, 1979: 34). As Karamoja did not provide any economic resources to the central government, its administration and economic development was considered by the colonial regime excessively difficult and costly (Dyson-Hudson, 1958).

### **3.2.2 'Development scheme': 1948-1955**

While between 1921 and 1940 only 21,000 head of cattle left the region<sup>37</sup>, in the period between 1941 and 1947 the total export of head of cattle from Karamoja increased to 43,000, slightly more than doubling in less than one third of the time (Dyson-Hudson, 1962). The need for meat by the British troops during the Second World War was unexpectedly satisfied by Karamoja's production, and this highlighted to the colonial regime the potential of the region as a cheap meat-exporting area, for the benefit of the entire country (Dyson-Hudson, 1958; Quam, 1978).

In 1948, the colonial regime formally established the Karamoja Cattle Scheme (Welch, 1969),<sup>38</sup> one of the most prominent attempts of the time to achieve economic development in the region (Quam, 1978). Initially, the cattle-marketing scheme started in 1938 (Gartrell, 1988), with the aim of supplying British troops fighting in East Africa with fresh meat, and later extended to providing meat to the growing urban and national meat markets in the country. At the same time, through the Karamoja Cattle Scheme, the colonial regime wanted to achieve other goals in Karamoja, such as the promotion of 'soft animal destocking', the reduction of overgrazing, the

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<sup>37</sup> Quam (1978: 55) reports another figure, though he mentions the same source as Dyson-Hudson, 1962: 788-89 and Barber 1962: 121.

<sup>38</sup> The full name was 'Karamoja Native Administration Cattle Trading Scheme' (Dyson-Hudson, 1962).

transformation of people into settled agriculturalists, and the introduction of a cash economy at the expense of the cattle economy (Quam, 1978: 56).

As part of the scheme, in 1948, the British colonial administrators built an enormous cattle quarantine in Iriiri (Baker, 1967; Quam, 1978), and until 1979, when the quarantine was finally dismissed, all cattle sold in Karamoja could leave the region only after being checked there. In this way, the authorities hoped to stabilise the distribution of the main cattle diseases, such as Rinderpest, Pleuro-pneumonia and East Coast Fever, for which the Karamoja boundary was actually a crude natural frontier (Baker, 1967: 18). While the provision of cheap meat from the region was found to be important for satisfying the needs of people living in growing urban centres, especially in the south, such as Kampala, Jinja and Entebbe (Quam, 1978; Gartrell, 1988), not all of the intended goals were achieved through the scheme. By the 1950s, the transformation of Karamoja from a cattle economy to a cash economy proved unsuccessful due to the low prices at which Karimojong animals were bought under the scheme. This was a consequence of the monopoly role the government played, which resulted in artificial prices (Quam, 1976; 1978). This was also due to the recurrent droughts, which put the Karimojong's survival at risk and drove them to the point of having to accept unfavourable terms of trade (Gartrell, 1988). In 1964, the Karamoja Cattle Scheme was terminated due to its economic failure caused by high costs of transport, animal diseases, raiding, and loss of animals during transport (Baker, 1967).

The British civil administration's establishment in the region in 1921 did not significantly change the Karimojong lifestyle. In most respects the modes of production, technology and available commodities in 1950s were similar to those available in the pre-colonial period (Dyson-Hudson, 1962). Major changes in the region started occurring in the mid-1950s, with an increase in violence (Okudi, 1992) as a clear symptom of the cumulative and 'harmful' colonial policies implemented during the previous decades. The *Pax Britannica*, which characterized the first thirty years of colonialism, ended in the mid-1950s (Gartrell, 1988: 210) and was followed by fifty years of endemic raiding.<sup>39</sup> According to Welch (1969: 115), there was a particular event that signalled the beginning of a significant switch that was marked by large

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<sup>39</sup> Up until the beginning of the disarmament programme of 2005/2006.

violent raids, before which [...] 'cattle raiding in Karamoja was a very local affair'. It occurred in 1955, and it was ' [...] the first large raid involving Karimojong warriors and Iteso tribesmen. Twenty two people were killed and 2.000 head of cattle were stolen' [...] (Welch, 1969: 115-116). This event led to the souring of relations between the Iteso and the Karimojong.<sup>40</sup>

The raiding episode of 1955 was not unique. From 1958 to 1961, the Karimojong undertook 185 raids in the Teso district (Welch, 1969). The deterioration of the relationships between the Iteso and the Karimojong was not an irregular circumstance at the time. It was fuelled by colonial 'obsessions' with drawing artificial borders, both at national and district levels, which eventually dispossessed fundamental resources from certain groups in favour of others (Mamdani, 1982). For example, following the establishment of artificial borders between 1920s and 1950s, the Karimojong lost thousands of square miles of grazing land, which went to the Pokot and the Iteso (ibid.).

The increased level of raiding in Karamoja throughout the 1950s has been explained by different scholars through the need for the Karimojong to re-acquire their animals and grazing land, and therefore restore their traditional production system after three decades of British colonial occupation and 'harmful' policies (Barber, 1962; Welch, 1969; Mamdani, 1982). Political and economic isolation from the central government and territorial restrictions within the region exacerbated competition over fundamental resources amongst neighbouring groups and caused cycles of violence in the form of raiding and counter-raiding (Gray, 2000). In a relatively short time, Karimojong herders found themselves in a situation in which they lost a considerable amount of grazing land, and their movements were increasingly restricted while their population was increasing<sup>41</sup> (Barber, 1962; Gartrell, 1985: 105; 1988). As Gartrell has pointed out: '[t]he pre-colonial response to population pressure – migration to new lands – was no longer possible; other peoples now ringed southern and eastern borders' (Gartrell, 1988: 210). As we have seen in other pastoral societies, a herd's

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<sup>40</sup> Though the Iteso [...] 'are generally despised by Karimojong as cowards too fearful to defend their herds' (Dyson-Hudson, 1958: 13).

<sup>41</sup> Between 1919 and 1948, the population in Karamoja increased by over 80 per cent. Between 1948 and 1959 the population consisted of 54,696 individuals and eleven years later increased to 170,000 individuals (Dyson-Hudson, 1962).

mobility over large areas is a fundamental strategy not only to maximize production, circumvent over-grazing and disease outbreaks among the animals, but also to avoid tensions with other herders and ethnic groups (Hesse and MacGregor, 2006). As will become clearer by the end of this chapter, these are the structural roots of violence in Karamoja, which manifested all of their consequences later on, in the 1980s.

The colonial response to the increased cross-border raids into the Teso region in 1958, was the Special Regions (Karamoja) Ordinance Act, which gave the Provincial Commissioner of Karamoja the powers to declare any section of the region a 'prohibited area', closed to any movement of cattle and humans. Under the Special Regions Ordinance, there was a 'peace bond' among residents, whereby if peace was broken a collective fine through the seizing of cattle would be imposed to all the residents of the area.<sup>42</sup> The colonial regime responded with a violent policy that was unable to address the structural problems that were fostering conflict in the region between neighbouring groups. As Baker (1967) points out,

The present enormous pressure on the natural water resources is also a result of an administrative misinterpretation of the interwar period when much of the Usuk [Ugandan Pokot] seasonal grazing land of the southern Karimojong was given to Teso and rapidly occupied by the Iteso causing considerable inter-tribal hostility. (Baker, 1967: 19)

The period that followed, between the end of the colonial regime and independence in 1962, was characterized by increasingly coercive state policies in Karamoja, especially following the 1961 Bataringaya report on the Karamoja Security Committee (Welch, 1969). The recommendations that came out from that report drastically changed the administration of the region and more coercion than before was implemented through the institution of the special force paramilitary police that was posted in Karamoja for the first time (ibid.). During this time, poor relations between the state and the Karimojong were exacerbated, thus 'setting the stage' for decades of warfare and lawlessness.

In the next section, I will discuss how the history of armament in Karamoja beginning in the twentieth century was a consequence of the Karimojong's need to

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<sup>42</sup> Special Regions Ordinance, 1958, Special supplement to the Uganda Gazette, Vol. II, 14 August 1958, pp318–327, quoted in Welch (1969: 118-9).



protect themselves from other armed groups, and reacquire their traditional means of production, both in land and cattle.

### **3.2.3 History of armament**

During the ivory trading period of the beginning of the twentieth century (Barber, 1962), the Karamojong used to exchange their elephant tusks for cattle. This trade was vital because it allowed the Karamojong to rebuild their herds after the large losses that occurred at the end of the nineteenth century, as a result of diseases, mainly Rinderpest, and droughts (ibid.). The long tusks that characterized elephants in Karamoja brought many foreign traders to the region, mainly Abyssinians and Arabs, and this soon resulted in increased competition over the ivory. However, according to Mamdani *et al.*, (1992: 25), ‘the ivory boom was [...] short lived, and it soon boomeranged. By 1910, elephants had been slaughtered in their thousands’ (quoted in Bell, 1949: 90).

The high profitability of the ivory resulted in the Karamojong increasing the prices to the point that foreign traders decided to use violence to acquire it (Barber, 1962). This was one of the Karamojong’s first encounters with modern weapons and they quickly understood their importance as means of subsistence and wealth accumulation. In fact, some Karamojong wanted to exchange the ivory for rifles, until the elephants neared extinction (ibid.). When the ivory trading stopped and the Karamojong rebuilt a relatively large number of herds, cattle began to be used in exchange for rifles (Marshall, 1965).

While in the early twentieth century the Karamojong already knew the value and power deriving from the possession of rifles, it was only a few people who owned them (Barber, 1962). Following the end of the Second War World, many Karamojong and Turkana who had been deployed by the colonial regime to provide support in the King’s African Rifles, went back home with both military experience and weapons (Mburu, 2002). In the 1950s rifles were also easily accessible and arrived in Karamoja due to several conflicts in the nearby countries; in Sudan and Congo, where there were civil wars, and in Ethiopia and Somalia, which were fighting the Ogaden conflict (Gulliver, 1955; Alnwick, 1985; Mkutu, 2008).

Not surprisingly, by the 1950s, the number of Karamojong owning rifles began to increase, and this was happening while neighbouring pastoral groups, such as the Turkana, Toposa and Didinga, were increasing their raids on the Karamojong (Mkutu, 2007). Within a context of state absence and economic isolation, with both people living in the region and their assets not being protected from neighbouring raiders, the Karamojong were pushed to acquire rifles to defend themselves and their property (Gray, 2000; Mkutu, 2007, 2008), through a sort of 'self help' technique involving violence (Gartrell, 1988: 210). An additional factor, which I indicated in the previous section, is that the possession of rifles also helped access more land as the population was increasing. This trend persisted in the region throughout all of the twentieth century.

Following the increase in possessions of rifles and the frequency of raids, between the 1940s and the 1970s, the national government responded with five government-led disarmament initiatives of varying scale,<sup>43</sup> which attempted to disarm the Karamojong of both spears and rifles (Gray, 2000; OPM, 2007: 6; Bevan, 2008) and confiscate cattle from the offending groups, which worsened the situation (Gartrell, 1988: 210). Between 1963 and 1971, during the Obote (locally recalled as Obote I) regime, the government used helicopters and tanks for large scale interventions in the region (Gray, 2000). In 1964, collective punishments for raiding were introduced once more through the Blood Money Committee (Welch, 1969), and, in the most fertile areas of the region, the process of 'rangeland dispossession' continued along with the establishment of natural protected areas and national parks (Mamdani, 1982; Rugadya *et al.*, 2013). Similarly, during the 1970s, other pastoral societies in East Africa experienced the same dispossessions of rangelands due to the expansion of parks and game reserves (McCabe *et al.*, 2010; Galaty, 2013).

During the time of the Idi Amin regime in Uganda, from 1971 to 1979, the level of violence and conflict in Karamoja escalated, and the Karamojong experienced enormous social and economic disruptions, during a time that was one of the most economically difficult of the twentieth century for the country as a whole.<sup>44</sup> An

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<sup>43</sup> In particular, in the years 1945, 1953, 1954, 1960, 1964 (Bevan, 2008: 54).

<sup>44</sup> As Hansen and Twaddle (1988: 20) have reported, during the Amin time (1972-9) 'up to 500,000 Ugandans died as a result of the regime.'

instance of the escalating conflict was when a few months after Amin took power, on August 5<sup>th</sup> 1971, there was the 'Karamoja exhibition' in Iriiri in which Idi Amin accused the Karamojong of being parasites, vagrants and immoral (because of their nakedness) (Maconi, 1988). As a result, in a protest demonstration against Idi Amin's outlaw of the traditional dress of sheets and the carrying of spears, and the forced adoption of a 'western' dress code, some 300 people from the Bokora section were shot dead at Nawaikorot (presently Kangole sub-county, in the south western part of the region) (Wilson, 1985: 164; OPM, 2007). The dress code policies were never fully implemented (Wilson, 1985), but the military presence in the region was more violent than before, and instead of protecting the people in the region from raids, soldiers actually stole their cattle. As Quam (1997) has described,

[...] Amin's army took over the job of stopping the raiders, and, according to local informants, was much more brutally efficient. The army pursued the raiders with a vengeance, and recovered many of the stolen livestock, but rather than return these recaptured cattle to their rightful owners, the soldiers confiscated them and sold them to local cattle traders. Now the people of Karamoja were faced with both armed raiders and a thieving army. (Quam, 1997: 4)

At the same time, the 1970s also registered a huge fall in the cattle population of the region (see Chapter Five), mainly due to international cross-border raiding and also lack of access to animal vaccinations (Wilson, 1985). For instance, Okudi (1992: 15) reported that from June 1971 to October 1975, 66 raids were carried out by the Turkana against the Bokora and more than 40,000 heads of cattle were stolen. Particularly, between 1973 and 1975 the Matheniko, in alliance with the Turkana (who were once their historical enemies), participated in raids against the Bokora in what was to be the first intra-ethnic cattle raid within the Karimojong territorial sections (Okudi, 1992; Gray, 2000; Gray *et al.*, 2003). As explained in the previous section, raiding or killing a 'fellow Karimojong' was an act that was traditionally punished through the seizing of cattle (Knighton, 2010). During my fieldwork I came to understand that questions regarding the reasons why Karimojong sections started to raid and kill each other are somewhat 'taboo'. I obtained several different explanations on this topic, from witchcraft practices to the fact that in using rifles instead of spears warriors did not see their enemies' faces anymore and thus unintentionally killed their

clan members or 'half brothers'.<sup>45</sup> The beginning of intra-ethnic raiding generated an environment of growing violence in cycles of raiding and retaliations that further encouraged the Karimojong to find the means necessary to arm themselves, in order to protect their lives and assets and acquire new wealth. At the same time, the colonial regime and the different post-colonial governments, especially the Amin regime, were experienced by the people in Karamoja as institutions of violence and conflict.

Overall, in the 1970s, the Karimojong acquired rifles through three different sources: firstly, the Amin Government often did not pay salaries to soldiers and police officers, who at times supplemented their low incomes by selling their rifles and bullets to the Karimojong in exchange for animals;<sup>46</sup> secondly, rifles were made with borehole parts and school furniture (locally known as *ngamatidai* or *amatida*) (Gray *et al.*, 2003); and thirdly, the weapons were exchanged by the Karimojong for cattle and other commodities.

The major Karimojong armament occurred after Amin's regime was overturned in 1979 and Ugandan soldiers rapidly left their barracks in Moroto. At this time, thousands of weapons and ammunition were looted, mainly by the Matheniko section (Wilson, 1985; Kinghton, 1990; Ocan, 1994; Gray, 2000; Walker, 2002; Mkutu, 2008). The Jie were second in the accumulation of weapons, acquired rifles mainly through the exchange of their animals (Okudi, 1992). This event caused the unequal possession of rifles that ultimately unbalanced the weaponry power among the different Karimojong groups (Knighton, 2003; 2005; 2010), generating a system of *winners* and *losers*.<sup>47</sup> In particular, the Dodoth, Pian and Bokora were among those Karimojong groups who neither had the opportunity to access rifles during the 1979 looting of the Moroto barracks, nor the possibility to buy large numbers of rifles. As a result, the high number of rifles concentrated in few Karimojong groups, such as the Matheniko, Jie and Pokot, in a *vacuum* of state power, led to an increase in the number of cattle raids, which brought well-armed groups to accumulate vast herds, at

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<sup>45</sup> Interview with local leader number #10 (see Appendix I).

<sup>46</sup> Interview with regional leader number #5 (see Appendix I).

<sup>47</sup> Interestingly, according to Okudi (1992: 12), "[...] Prior to the 1979 liberation war, the Dodoth were in a superior military position that the other pastoral groups in Karamoja [...]."

the expense of less armed groups, such as the Bokora, Dodoth<sup>48</sup> and Pian (Cisternino and Rowland, 1980; Knighton, 1990, 2010; Gray, 2000; Gray *et al.*, 2003). Between 1979 and 1981, the Dodoth, in the northern part of Karamoja, were completely dispossessed of their cattle by both the Jie and Matheniko, the latter in alliance with the Turkana (Cisternino, 1985b; Okudi, 1992).

According to different scholars (Ocan, 1992; 1994; Mirzler and Young, 2000; Gray, 2000; 2003), the proliferation of rifles following the armament of 1979, signed the beginning of the ‘modern Karamojong violence’, within which the ‘economic function’ of raiding changed from communal resource to individual gain, transforming the social behaviour from an inter-ethnic raiding to intra-ethnic raiding. While the looting of the Moroto barracks upset the balance of power in the region – creating unequal access to rifles across the different Karamojong groups – the roots of the violence were more structural and began much earlier from when the proliferation of rifles started. Between the end of the 1970s and the beginning of 1980s, Uganda as a country faced a time of political instability and militarisation, and in Karamoja security drastically worsened, in a spiral of violence between armed enemy groups and sporadic, brutal retaliations, both by the government and the local militia. The country was in ‘chaos’ and Karamoja was completely ‘abandoned’ by the central government. Raiding, animal diseases and the collapse of the major infrastructures were issues not addressed by the central government, to the point that:

The social service infrastructure of the region broke down almost entirely in 1979 thereby rendering hospitals, health centres, water supplies and administrative services unavailable to the Karimojong. (Dodge and Wiebe, 1985: 75)

In the next section, I will illustrate what happened to the Bokora section in particular, in the aftermath of the unequal distribution of weaponry power, and the context of state absenteeism.

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<sup>48</sup> See the next section on how the stockless and disarmed Dodoth were pushed by Oxfam to become settled farmers in the Kaabong district.

### 3.3 Development era: 1980-2006

#### 3.3.1 The great famine

This chapter has already illustrated how drought is an endemic threat in a semi-arid region such as Karamoja, in response to which a complex production system was developed by the Karamojong to offset the risks of hunger (locally named *akoro*). The events that occurred during the 1970s greatly disrupted this system, especially for some Karamojong groups, such as the Bokora. The combination of violence, disease, loss of animals and crop failures for many families resulted in a devastating famine that struck the entire region, hitting those families who had already lost their animals due to armed raiding particularly hard. Ugandan scholar Ben Okudi has very well summarized the combination of natural, social and political factors that brought about the famine in 1980:

Over time the majority of the population has been gradually impoverished [e.g. Bokora] and made vulnerable to the point that food shortages can quickly lead to famine. (Okudi, 1992: 1)

Furthermore, between 1978 and 1980, the people of Karamoja also experienced a cholera epidemic that killed thousands (Wilson, 1985; Okudi, 1992), and consecutive years of crop failures due to repeated droughts (Cisternino, 1985b; Gray, 2000). The situation was further worsened by the increased armed raiding – following Idi Amin’s overthrow in 1979 – thus setting the stage for the famine of 1980. This event, named in the local narrative and literature as the ‘great famine’,<sup>49</sup> caused the death of ‘21 per cent of the population [...] in the twelve months up to December 1980, mostly from starvation’ (Biellik and Henderson, 1981: 1333). An estimated 50,000 people died of which 25,000 were children (Biellik and Henderson, 1981).<sup>50</sup>

However, the consequences of the famine did not have the same outcomes, across the different Karamojong groups (Okudi, 1992). While the Bokora, Pian and Dodoth were raided of most of their animals, thus signing the beginning of the process

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<sup>49</sup> This epithet was likely inspired by what is generally regarded as the ‘great famine’ of 1846-48 in Ireland, during which one million people died.

<sup>50</sup> Because the food security assessment was carried out among the Pian section of the Karimojong, it is likely that these estimates are lower than the actual number of people who died. Similar comments have been raised by Knighton in his PhD dissertation (1990).

of the Bokora's 'de-pastoralization', the well-armed groups Jie, Matheniko and Pokot accumulated large amounts of livestock (Gray, 2000).<sup>51</sup> Therefore, stockless Karamojong, without animals to exploit during drought and without rifles to eventually reacquire the animals through raiding, either died of hunger or migrated elsewhere. This fact reinforces the narrative of food crises oftentimes being 'unequalising' forces instead of 'levelling' forces (Keen, 1994).

The outcome of the famine was severe in terms of human losses also due to the absence of state intervention following the breakdown that occurred in the aftermath of Idi Amin's overthrow in 1979. Frequent animal raids, car ambushes, looting of agriculture produce and dispensaries conducted by uncontrolled militia and thieves resulted in an environment of high insecurity. In addition, health services, trade, transport and local markets came to a halt. This situation made the effects of the famine even more widespread, making it difficult for any external relief organization to intervene to try to contain the outcomes. In June 1980 journalist Nick Worral reported that:

In recent months, one United Nations agency lost more than 50 vehicles in armed hijackings, and last week the New York-based CARE organization lost two Ugandan employees who were shot dead by soldiers who stole their truck. In this way, hundreds of tons of relief food have found their way onto the Ugandan black market instead of to the proper recipients.<sup>52</sup>

The increased international media attention<sup>53</sup> to events in Karamoja – including the request for aid from the local missionaries living in the region (which will be discussed later in the chapter) – led several aid agencies to start supplying relief (Okudi, 1992). The major response to the famine of 1980 was food aid, implemented mainly by the WFP and delivered by different NGOs and charity organizations. Given the severity and extent of people's destitution, and as was later demonstrated in the outcome of the famine, this response was inadequate. Large scale food aid only started to arrive in the region from April 1980, months after the famine had begun. Throughout the year, despite the fact that every county head had its own feeding centre, less than half the people were fed (Biellik and Henderson, 1981). In addition, there were logistical

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<sup>51</sup> In Turkana, a similar drought did not have the same outcomes as it did in Karamoja (Gray *et al.*, 2003).

<sup>52</sup> His article is still available on: [www.csmonitor.com/1980/0610/061041.html](http://www.csmonitor.com/1980/0610/061041.html).

<sup>53</sup> See, for example, BBC documentary: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=S\\_gQqXeB\\_IM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S_gQqXeB_IM).

problems in transporting food relief across the region and difficulties in distributing it to the beneficiaries due to the lack of safety, lack of fuel and necessary spare parts, and the limited availability of trucks (Lancet, 1980). Generally speaking, the food aid distribution in 1980 was both insufficient and lacked coordination among the different stakeholders, nevertheless the death-rate did slow down (Gartrell, 1988). Though the relief effort effectively came together in February 1981 – some 20 months after the famine had begun –, the responsibility for the delay and inefficient response from the humanitarian industry is indisputable. In addition, it is also worth mentioning that, while the population was dying of starvation and disease, the role of the state (Obote II regime) was non-existent in the region.<sup>54</sup>

The famine of 1980 can generally be described as a ‘post-modern famine’ (cf. Devereux, 2007) because it was exacerbated by failures of response tied to political factors such as war, and state and international aid system failures. The government of Uganda had no interest in Karamoja at the time, and the lack of assistance during the famine almost appeared intentional (Knighton, 1990; Gray, 2000). In her reconstruction, Obbo (1988) has stressed the major responsibilities of the Ugandan government before and during the famine:

[i]n 1980 the district of Karamoja was devastated by famine due to no fault of the population; indeed the fleeing Amin soldiers exacerbated the situation by stealing or killing their cattle at an accelerated rate. The attitudes expressed in statements often heard by UNICEF workers in Kampala were even once quoted by *Newsweek* magazine reporter, as follows: “The Karamojong have been primitive for a long time. Let them starve. Leave the food, clothing and medicines here”. (Obbo, 1988:208)

The famine was a turning point in the history of Karamoja, especially for the Bokora and Pian sections (Gray, 2000). The event permanently brought to the region several NGOs, such as the Red Cross, ACF, OXFAM, CONCERN, SCF, and Terre des Hommes (WFP, 1981)<sup>55</sup>, as well as different UN agencies. This began what was to become a decades-long, massive relief assistance in the region (see also Chapter Nine).

While the WFP had been providing food aid in the region since 1964 (with

<sup>54</sup> See Chapter Nine to understand how the humanitarian system operated in the absence of the state.

<sup>55</sup> WFP, 1981 – Report on a visit to Uganda and Kenya by Messrs. Syts and Murphy to review operational aspects of the Uganda Emergency Operation 1185.



occasional interruptions<sup>56</sup>), the great famine of 1980 drastically changed the magnitude of aid delivered to the region. The WFP school meals programme, which was installed in the region in 1981, played a crucial role in the process of socio-economic transformation that was occurring in Karamoja. In fact, the school meals programme was the major reason why, over time, few children attended school in Karamoja; whenever food was not available at school, children deserted classes and engaged in other activities, such as herding labour and bird scaring.<sup>57</sup> Still today the presence of food in the schools is a key element that determines the overall school attendance in the region.

Due to the fear of creating dependency<sup>58</sup> in the region, by 1984, after four years of food aid, the government had to request the WFP to change strategy from humanitarian assistance to development. At this time, the WFP developed a new project aimed at stopping food aid, and assisted the government in its efforts to incentivise people to settle down in the more fertile areas of Karamoja (WFP, 1984).<sup>59</sup>

On October 1<sup>st</sup> 1984 the new project began its first food distribution targeting 71,755 beneficiaries for institutional feeding through hospitals, schools, health centres, and rural infrastructures, which were conducted via food-for-work activities (WFP, 1987).<sup>60</sup> These recurrent food distributions in established feeding centres and the provision of food at schools and hospitals eventually encouraged people to settle down (Dodge and Wiebe, 1985). According to Cisternino (1985a), food aid in Karamoja is a phenomenon that reversed emigration outside the region, paralysed customary and national intervention, and strengthened the *status quo*.

In summary, the events of the early 1980s entailed the loss of many human lives, the uneven distribution of rifles and livestock across the different Karamojong groups, massive migrations towards other parts of the region and other parts of Uganda, and lastly, the permanent establishment of a humanitarian sector in the region. This period of time also shows how those Karamojong groups who remained

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<sup>56</sup> The first WFP intervention in Karamoja was for Sudanese refugees who suffered from the civil war in Southern Sudan.

<sup>57</sup> Interview with regional informant number #3 (see Appendix I).

<sup>58</sup> Ever since 1980, the fear of creating 'dependency' in Karamoja has always characterized most of the papers, reports and project documents concerning the development of the region (see Chapter Nine).

<sup>59</sup> WFP, 1984 – Project document 2642 'Multipurpose Rural Development in Karamoja Region.'

<sup>60</sup> WFP, 1987 – Progress reports on approved projects – 2642.

stockless suffered the worst consequences of the famine (Okudi, 1992). Certainly, violence and hunger have been among the major features that characterized the 1980s in Karamoja, creating a spiral in which the increased food insecurity heightened intra-ethnic conflict, which in turn caused more food insecurity.

In the next section, I will analyse the role played by the Roman Catholic missionaries in Karamoja, during this difficult phase in the region's history.

### **3.3.2 The Roman Catholic Church**

The history of the Catholic Church in Karamoja started in 1924 (Dyson-Hudson, 1962). The aim of converting the Karamojong to Christian faith initially started by exerting influence through the support of formal education (Knighton, 1990), and continued through the provision of health care, charity and agricultural projects (see Chapter Eight). The popularity of the religion and the propagation of Christian values among the Karamojong increased significantly from the 1980s onwards due to the fundamental role played by Catholic missionaries during the great famine.

Among the missionaries living in Karamoja, such as the Verona Fathers (Comboni order), as early as in November 1979 there were clear indications that a famine would have occurred. They reported an emergency situation but were not taken seriously (Knighton, 1990: 221). Between November 1979 and March 1980, the local Catholic missionaries in the area began to buy food for local distribution at the church for those most in need, but their limited capacity soon resulted in an unmanageable situation. In July 1980, the Verona Fathers made an appeal directly to the WFP in Rome for immediate food assistance to the starving Karamojong (Alnwick, 1985). The churches soon became feeding centres with missionaries working as relief operators, so that already by 1979,

Some areas [of Karamoja] were deserted as people moved to be closer to religious missions for protection and, where available, for food and medical services. (Biellik and Henderson, 1981: 1330)

A similar story occurred on the other side of the border in Kenya, where '75% of Turkana pastoralists moved to mission centres distributing famine-relief during the droughts in northern Kenya in the 1980s [...]' (Fratkin *et al.*, 2005: 156).

Overall, the famine of 1980 was a turning point also for the history of Catholicism in Karamoja, signing the beginning of good relationships between this institution and the Karamojong (see Chapter Eight). In fact, due to the support provided by the Catholic Church to save lives during the famine '[...] missionaries [...] experienced an increase in the number of baptisms as their parishes became involved in food distribution' (Cisternino, 1985b: 158).

Throughout the great famine, many Karamojong families migrated in more fertile areas of the region such as Iriiri, Morulem, Karenga and Namalu. In particular, this signed the first substantial migration towards the area of Iriiri, a migration that was mainly formed by Bokora stockless and destitute families, who had been raided of all their cattle, mainly by the Matheniko section in alliance with either the Turkana or the Jie (Okudi, 1992).

In 1981, the Moroto Catholic diocese founded its social service and development sector, the 'development wing' of the Catholic mission in Karamoja that started four agricultural projects in the wetter areas of Karamoja (Namalu, Iriiri, Morulem and Karenga).<sup>61</sup> At the time of hunger and famine, Father Cisternino, a Combonian responsible for the development sector of the Moroto diocese, suggested that any development partners in Karamoja, including Catholic missionaries, had to focus their interventions beyond the provision of humanitarian assistance. He then proposed a rural development plan aimed at improving agricultural production in those areas with more agricultural potential.

Throughout the famine, and immediately after it, the Catholic diocese (at that time the only one in the whole region had its mission in Moroto), decided to support the Karamojong in three major ways: firstly, by calling international organizations to help people get food relief; secondly, by providing relief themselves as well as by supporting various NGOs and UN agencies in their humanitarian activities; and thirdly, by incrementing agricultural production in the wetter areas of Karamoja, where some of the families who had lost their livestock in central Karamoja had already migrated. With regards to agricultural production, the diocese wanted to improve the production of cereals by ploughing many plots of land using their own tractors.

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<sup>61</sup> Retrieved from <http://www.ssdworld.org.ug/history.htm>.

The diocese had two active sites, the parish of Namalu and the farm of Amaler. These two sites were responsible for the production of the local food that was needed for the activities of the diocese, including the provision of food relief. The farm of Amaler was managed by Father Zanetti, a Combonian missionary who opened the 'missionary farms' that used European agrarian techniques and had several employees.<sup>62</sup> The other two major projects linked to the missionary farms were the creation of farmer groups and the large scale introduction of ox-ploughing in order to introduce Karamojong men to agricultural production (which was traditionally 'taboo' for men).

Overall, the Catholic 'missionary farms' in the green belts aimed at creating the necessary skills to help a first generation of permanently stockless Karamojong families learn how to earn a living from the sole exploitation of settled agriculture, as clients of the mission. It was reported that also in other pastoral areas, 'Church initiated agricultural schemes' (see, Fratkin 2013 in: Catley *et al.*, 2013: 202) were happening, and that 'a significant amount of [...] development was provided by international religious donors, particularly the Roman Catholic Church [...] (Fratkin, 2004: 121).

In northern Kenya, religious organizations involved in famine relief work including the Catholic Relief Services, encouraged poor pastoralists to settle permanently at famine relief points to deliver food and social services, but also to disengage pastoral populations from their nomadic lifestyle. (Fratkin *et al.*, 2005: 2)

The economic resources that poured into places such as Iriiri and Namalu through the Catholic Church, served as 'push' factors to those still living in central Karamoja to follow their relatives and clan members along the pattern of migration towards the 'green belts' of Karamoja. Certainly, it is not a coincidence that those Karamojong who migrated first towards more fertile areas were those who had been most affected by the events of 1980s, such as the Bokora, Pian and Dodoth.

By helping destitute and stockless families that migrated south and west and by encouraging settled agriculture, the Catholic missions initiated the 'agrarian transformation' of Karamoja. In the next section, I will discuss the outcomes of the

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<sup>62</sup> Interview with regional leader number #2 (see Appendix I).

humanitarian and development activities of the church and aid agencies, in the area of Iriiri.

### 3.3.3 Bokora resettlement

Traditionally, the area of Iriiri in the south western part of Karamoja, was one of the most fertile areas in the entire region. For a long time its geographic position – an isolated ‘no man’s land’ – never attracted any Karamojong groups to settle down. The Karamojong were reluctant to settle in this area due to hostilities with neighbouring groups (Novelli, 1999), as well as a humidity that, according to them, caused diseases among the population and their herds.<sup>63</sup> For decades, the human presence in Iriiri was only throughout the dry season when Bokora herders migrated from central Karamoja to establish temporary settlements known as *awi* (kraals), grazing their animals in the area between Mount Napak and the Teso region (Farina, 1965; Dyson-Hudson, 1966).

The relationship between central Karamoja and the area of Iriiri began to change for the first time with the 1948 building of the cattle quarantine in Iriiri, under the Karamoja Cattle Scheme (see previous section). As the quarantine required labour power, especially for grazing and protecting the animals, and created opportunities for trading livestock, following the institution of the quarantine there was the first migration of families to the area of Iriiri. In addition, the quarantine also attracted many cattle raiders, since it provided the highest concentration of livestock in the entire region.<sup>64</sup> However, the first large wave of migration towards Iriiri did not occur until after the great famine started, when stockless and destitute Bokora families established themselves in the area.

The resettlement of the Karamojong in the wetter areas of the region was one of the major rural development plans of the 1980s (Cisternino, 1985b; Wilson, 1985), and humanitarian and missionary support was directed at strengthening the provision of services and livelihood projects to stockless peoples who had resettled after the

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<sup>63</sup> As a matter of fact, even today, people living in the fertile areas of Karamoja experience higher rates of malaria contraction compared to other areas. For instance, Namalu in *Ngakaramojong* means disease, and it is the name of the trading centre among the Pian section, one of the most fertile areas of Karamoja.

<sup>64</sup> Group discussion number #3 (see Appendix I).

famine. In 1984, John Wilson (1985)<sup>65</sup> wrote these ‘prophetic’ words when only few families used to live in the fertile areas of Karamoja:

[...] my own conclusion is that the case for resettlement in the more productive western areas of Karamoja of those who have been deprived of livestock has become unarguable. [...] plenty of unoccupied land can be found around Iriiri, for example, and further into the Napak mountain area. (Wilson, 1985: 167-168)

Wilson’s major argument was that, since most of the families in Karamoja had lost their cattle and agriculture was not a viable production system in central Karamoja, migrations towards the more fertile areas of the region was inevitable and essential. According to Wilson, policies for restocking were not considered because eventually they would have led to more raiding and caused problems of overgrazing. His idea was already expressed by the central government in the 1960s, when

D. Parminter of the Uganda Ministry of Agriculture had proposed the relocation of 50 per cent of Karamoja’s population and 75 per cent of its livestock to areas west of their traditional permanent settlement zone, where rainfall was more reliable. (Dyson-Hudson, 1987: 11)

Similar patterns had spontaneously occurred already among the Pian and Bokora sections of the Karimojong, when, in the aftermath of the famine and the loss of their animals, they migrated south to the green belt of the Namalu and Iriiri sub-counties (Wilson, 1985).

The most tangible attempt of planned resettlement in Karamoja occurred among the Dodoth in 1981 (under Wilson’s supervision), when many families were ‘pulled’ by Oxfam, through food-for-work opportunities, to the most fertile parts of the Kaabong district (north Karamoja), to the Kapedo sub-county and, later, in 1984, to the Lolelia sub-county (Wilson, 1985; Dyson-Hudson, 1987; Wabwire, 1993). The ultimate goal of the project was to transform stockless pastoralists into settled farmers based on the assumption that stockless pastoralists were sources of raiding, overgrazing and famine, and that their ‘transformation’ into settled farmers would have been positive for both social order in the region and resilience to future droughts (Wabwire, 1993).

Rapidly, fertile areas of Karamoja, such as Iriiri and Namalu, became

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<sup>65</sup> John Wilson was an agricultural officer in Karamoja during the colonial regime. Among other places he worked in Iriiri as well and it is still remembered from the elders as the ‘white man who introduced agriculture in the place’.

increasingly populated and functioned as ‘repositories of aid’ and Catholic Church projects, including farming activities, schools and hospitals. These activities mainly consisted in supporting farming and formal education, and providing food relief, which eventually encouraged more people to migrate to the areas. The Iriiri area also saw the first Bokora families who had migrated, resettled and survived, begin to re-acquire their cattle.

The previously described unbalanced distribution of weaponry power across the region since the looting of the Moroto barracks in 1979, was rebalanced around the mid-1980s when the Bokora section acquired rifles in an ambush on Ugandan military transports sent to Karamoja, in response to an outbreak of hostilities with the Teso - an event locally remembered as *a militia* (Gray, 2000: 411). What followed was that, during the 1980-1989 period, the cattle population in Karamoja increased by circa 692,000 head of cattle (Stites and Akabwai, 2009: 10). This was mainly due to the growing armament of those groups who had been previously left without rifles in the looting of the Moroto barracks – namely, the Dodoth, Pian and Bokora. In the 1980s, these Karamojong groups raided the neighbouring ethnic groups, beginning a process of re-arming, raiding and re-stocking. One Italian Catholic priest from the mission of Mathany (not far from Iriiri) described to me the importance of rifles for the Karamojong in that period: ‘rifles in exchange of cattle, rifles as a source of cattle and rifles to protect cattle.’<sup>66</sup>

After the mid-1980s, the Iteso suffered the worst consequences of the armament of the Bokora who had wanted to rebuild their herds. As Knighton (2010) has pointed out,

The Bokora were also much involved in raiding far to south and west in the 1980s and 1990s, provoking reactions from the Teso, Kumam and Lango, as well as the [Uganda People’s Defence Forces] UPDF. (Knighton, 2010: 134)

While between 1945 and 1964 government disarmament initiatives were sporadic attempts to disarm the Karamojong of traditional arms, in the 1980s, under President Obote II, given the growing proliferation of rifles in the region, government

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<sup>66</sup> Interview with regional leader number #5 (see Appendix I).

attempts to disarm the Karamojong became more violent and included the use of bombs and helicopters (Gray *et al.*, 2003; OPM, 2007).

In the beginning of the 1980s<sup>67</sup>, the newly established human settlements in Iriiri experienced high levels of violence in the form of armed conflicts and reprisals between the Bokora, soldiers, and militia of bordering districts.<sup>68</sup> In 1984, for example, a group of paramilitaries from the Teso region massacred civilians in Iriiri in retaliation to a massive raid previously carried out by the Bokora section in the Teso region. The destruction and arson of Iriiri resulted in both the temporary abandonment of the centre and people's resettlement in the nearby, more secure areas.<sup>69</sup> After this event, permanent settlements, such as the villages of Napeilet and Nakedo, were built outside the Iriiri region, which<sup>70</sup>, up until that moment, had not been inhabited, as the areas outside the centre of Iriiri were bushy, desolate and inhabited by wild animals.<sup>71</sup>

This migration pattern of 1984 from Iriiri to villages at the foot of mount Napak, for security purposes, was also common in other parts of the region, such as Namalu, which is the main green location in the region, mostly inhabited by the Pian section. Depending on the threat – either from government militia, paramilitary or raiders – some families migrated in and out and between remote villages and trading centres.<sup>72</sup>

Both Iriiri and Namalu are 'custodian' gate areas of the west and south entrances into Karamoja and, not surprisingly, their history is quite similar. In the next section, I introduce a brief history of Lojom, one of the villages around the Iriiri trading centre.

### 3.3.4 Recent history of Iriiri and Lojom

Following the 1984 arson of Iriiri, most of the inhabitants left the centre and the clan of Adupinkal resettled in Nakedo. As in the past, 'Settlement[s] [were] denoted by the names of their "owners" – the senior homestead head in residence' (Dyson-Hudson, 1966: 116). Due to repeated illnesses that were striking the people in the settlement,

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<sup>67</sup> This historical period is locally recalled as 'Obote Two.'

<sup>68</sup> Gubert, 1988: 191.

<sup>69</sup> Interview with regional leader number #5 (see Appendix I).

<sup>70</sup> Nakedo means 'those who hide', because the area was inhabited by people who left Iriiri centre in 1984 when the centre was burnt.

<sup>71</sup> Interview with regional leader number #5 (see Appendix I).

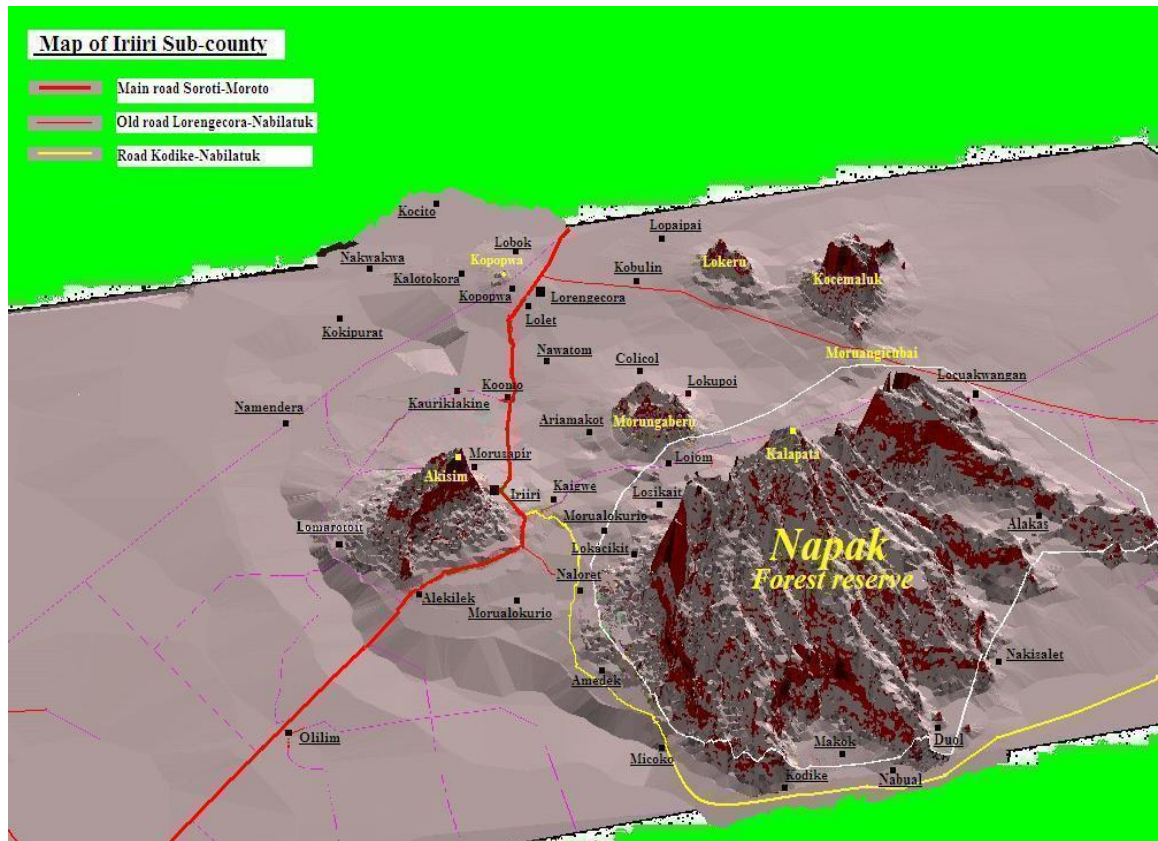
<sup>72</sup> Interview with regional leader number #2 (see Appendix I).



around 1994<sup>73</sup> the clan decided to move again, a few miles away. The new settlement was called 'Lojom Adupinkal', and a few kilometres away from it was the 'Lojom Lokoru'<sup>74</sup> settlement, with another homestead head.

Lojom<sup>75</sup> is located seven kilometres north east from Iriiri, at the foot of Mount Napak (see Map 2), where rainfall is more frequent and the land is relatively fertile in comparison to the rest of the region (see Chapter Six).

**Map 2: Iriiri sub-county and surrounding villages including Lojom**



Source: Author's map

The reasons why many families, initially from the same clan,<sup>76</sup> first migrated to the area of Iriiri were diverse depending on the period. Families who currently live in Lojom specified that, in the 1980s, they left central Karamoja due to hunger and insecurity, with insecurity resulting from armed raiding. Later on, in the 1990s and

<sup>73</sup> There is disagreement on when Lojom was build. According to Adupinkal it was build in 1994, after they migrated from Nakedo village.

<sup>74</sup> The second village/manyatta (Lokuru), the one closer to the kraal, was build earlier, in 1987, and is populated by 80 families.

<sup>75</sup> In Iriiri, sometime people still refer to Lojom as 'those of Nakedo.'

<sup>76</sup> Usually, the extended family is the widest agnatic kinship connection that includes the grandfather of the family with all his wives and relatives, such unmarried girls, married sons with their wives and children (Gulliver, 1955).

2000s, the main drive behind the migration from central Karamoja to Lojom was the availability of fertile land to obtain good harvest, and the opportunities for trading in Iriiri.<sup>77</sup>

Following the armament of the mid 1980s, the 1990s saw many Bokora warriors in the entire Iriiri sub-county, including those who later formed Lojom, become heavily armed. During this time, the National Resistance Movement (NRM) regime was mainly engaged with an insurgent group in northern Uganda, named the Lord Resistance Army (LRA). The LRA insurgency in Teso, especially between 1987 and 1993 (Jones, 2005; Kandel, 2016), was a favourable opportunity for Bokora warriors from Iriiri and other Karimojong sections, to the exploit the civil war, heavily raid the neighbouring Iteso, and ambush any cars along the main roads between Teso and Karamoja (OPM, 2007). In turn, the Bokora living in the border regions in Iriiri and Lojom experienced several retaliations from the Iteso, regardless of who was directly involved in the raiding.

While there were no proper government disarmament programmes during the 1990s, Sam Abura Pirir, who was appointed in 1992 as Secretary of Security for Moroto District, organized a 'paramilitary group' to deal with the mounting of raids in that period of time, in Karamoja (Gray, 2000). In order to do this he employed ten armed ex-warriors from each parish, who were locally called 'vigilantes'<sup>78</sup> (Quam, 1997). For a period of time, raided cattle, looted property and sometimes money were recovered from vigilantes and returned to their rightful owners (Mkutu, 2007: 53). But this initiative too soon failed when 'vigilantes' began raiding together with Karimojong warriors, a much more profitable activity compared to the salaries they received by the local government.<sup>79</sup>

According to Peter Lokeris, who is the current Karimojong Minister of Energy and Minerals, in that period of time, the state's major concern with fully disarming the Karimojong had to do with whether the state would have been able to continue protecting the people once they were disarmed.<sup>80</sup> Nevertheless, 'between 1986 and 1999, the Karimojong had intensified their raiding, which devastated much of

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<sup>77</sup> Source my own census survey conducted in Lojom in 2014.

<sup>78</sup> The vigilantes were also called the Anti-Stock Theft Unit (better known as ASTU).

<sup>79</sup> Interview with regional informant number #5 (see Appendix I).

<sup>80</sup> Interview with regional informant number #6 (see Appendix I).

Karamoja and the neighbouring districts' (OPM, 2007: 7). As a result, on the March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2000, Mike Mukula, a member of the Parliament from the Soroti Municipality, moved a motion in Parliament to disarm Karamoja. This brought about the first disarmament action in 2001. Citizenship and possession of rifles were depicted as two incompatible resources. The Karamojong would either have to surrender their guns or not be part of the country (Gray, 2000).

The first disarmament programme under the NRM regime started in December 2001 and was followed voluntarily by the Karamojong. During this process, the Bokora section handed over more rifles in comparison to all other Karamojong groups (Mburo, 2002). The reasons for the Bokora's willingness to voluntarily hand over more rifles and participate in the UPDF disarmament exercise are still unknown. According to Knighton (2010),

The Bokora and the Pian appear to have considered that their communities and their lives would be harmed more by keeping their guns, than in handing them in. (Knighton, 2010: 137)

During the voluntary disarmament of 2001, in exchange for the returned rifles, the government initially promised to give the inhabitants of Iriiri and Lojom ox-ploughs, but only some inhabitants received them.<sup>81</sup> The plan also involved distributing, in exchange for rifles, a bag of maize flour in agricultural areas, and iron sheets (*mabati*) for roofing, in less agricultural areas. In both cases, the government gave inhabitants certificates as a sign of appreciation. In addition, 'Each kraal leader who mobilised guns from the villages received 40 pieces of iron sheets' (OPM, 2007: 7).

In Lojom, the year 2001 is well remembered as the year in which most families started to lose their livestock (see Chapter Five). In fact, those local warriors who were disarmed first were also the first ones to be raided because the police and army were often ineffective in protecting disarmed herders' lives and property from both armed Karamojong, and cross-border armed raiders from Kenya and southern Sudan (Gray, 2000; Walker, 2002). In comparison to the UPDF, armed herders were certainly more equipped, dedicated and organized in defending themselves and their property from raiders (Eaton, 2008a). As Stites has pointed out,

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<sup>81</sup> It is reported that only 3,308 ox-plough were purchased under the incentive scheme as opposed to over 7,000 guns that were returned (OPM, 2007: 9).

The 2000-2001 disarmament of the Bokora paved the way for substantial loss of livestock and destruction of livelihoods as the uneven disarmament and inadequate external protection left the Bokora open to repeated attacks by other groups. (Stites *et al.*, 2007: 7)

As soon as the war with the LRA ended, in 2006 the government launched the Karamoja Integrated Development and Disarmament Programme, the biggest disarmament programme in the history of Karamoja.<sup>82</sup> Although this also aimed at creating alternative livelihood options, its primary focus was disarmament through the 'cordon and search' method (Human Rights Watch, 2007), which included the enclosure of the local population into designated areas in order to search for rifles.

Iriiri and Lojom warriors living next to the main road, bordering other Ugandan ethnic groups and far from international borders, did not have many places to hide their rifles. These same warriors were the ones who, following the voluntary disarmament of 2001, were quickly raided of most of their animals by warriors who were still armed both within and outside Karamoja, and during the forced disarmament of 2006 they were also the first ones to be disarmed. This shows how both the 'Bokora and Pian are the two territorial sections that have succumbed the most to disarmament' (Knighton, 2010: 124).

The Bokora families of Lojom thus experienced two moments of 'livestock dispossession'. The first one was a result of the unequal armament of the 1980s, when the Matheniko, Jie and Pokot exploited their armament advantage and raided the Bokora, Dodoth and Pian. The second one was in the 2000s, during both the voluntary and forced disarmament exercises, which were a result of their particular geographic location, far from international borders and remote mountains in which they could hide both themselves and their rifles, which ultimately caused them to surrender more rifles in comparison to other groups (Mburu, 2002). Having been among the first Karamojong to be disarmed, they were therefore the first ones whose animals were raided.

Following another 'livestock dispossession', families both in Iriiri and Lojom embraced new means of social reproduction based on combined farming and off-farming activities (see Chapters Six and Seven). As will be shown throughout the

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<sup>82</sup> A full explanation of the Karamoja Integrated Development and Disarmament Programme is provided in Chapter Five.

course of this thesis, these economic activities are actually both scarcely productive and remunerative. At present, after years of significant presence of UPDF troops in the region, most rifles have been recovered and security has greatly improved (Small Arms Survey, 2012). However, the current peace is combined with 'starvation and dependence' (Knighton, 2010: 139).

## Conclusion

This chapter has documented the slow deconstruction of an indigenous production system (Vincent, 1982: 6) into a system more assimilated and incorporated with the rest of the country, in a process of 'Ugandanization of the Karamojong' (Gray, 2000: 413). Colonial and post-colonial interventions in the region have slowly reduced people and animal mobility, thus establishing new modes of production and governance. This situation is actually not very different from what happens in other pastoral areas in Africa, where international aid agencies, relief organizations and churches have all encouraged sedentarization and the development of agricultural projects among the local people (Fratkin, 2004: 120).

Due to the possession of rifles, this historical process of national incorporation was for a long time resisted by the Karamojong. But when warriors such as the Bokora were disarmed by the NRM regime, most families found themselves stockless, unable to rebuild their herds, and dependant on charity and wage labour for their livelihoods. Until the Karamojong possessed cattle and were able to pursue a transhumant agro-pastoralist lifestyle, they were able to maintain their socio-economic independence, maintaining a sort of 'immunity' to external change agents (Knighton, 2005). For the families who now live in Lojom, this began to come to a halt initially with the great famine of 1980, and later on with the disarmament programmes of 2001 and 2006.

In the next chapter, I will analyse the outcomes of this historical process of socio-economic change in the village of Lojom, located in the south western part of Karamoja.

#### **4. Livelihood Outcomes and Social Classes in Lojom**

## **Introduction**

Through a case study of the village of Lojom, this chapter will examine the socio-economic outcomes of the historical transformation described previously in Chapter Three. The first part of the chapter describes the current modes of production of the people living in Lojom, which are no longer based on transhumant agro-pastoralism, but on a sedentarized lifestyle that is diversified by a set of alternative means of social reproduction, such as farming, casual labour and exploitation of natural resources. The second part of the chapter offers a broad statistical description of the complex production system that shapes the economy of Lojom. It then analyses the local understandings of the two concepts of 'wealth' and 'poverty' in a historical perspective, which are used by people in Lojom to identify four different wealth groups in the village.

What emerges from this chapter is that within the local production system of Lojom there is a high level of socio-economic differentiation, whereby the same minority (18 per cent) of wealthier families own multiple assets (most of the cattle plus most of the smallstock plus most of the land and so on) and the majority (82 per cent) of the population is either poor or very poor (and most of them are equally dispossessed of major assets). The chapter concludes highlighting the importance of moving the analysis forward from a focus on wealth stratification only, to an investigation on the social relationships of production between wealth groups that reproduce wealth stratification over time.



## 4.1 Broad Statistical Description of Lojom

### 4.1.1 Demography

Administratively, Lojom is part of the Tepeth parish, one of the three parishes under the Iriiri sub-county, in Napak district. In 2014, Lojom was composed of 708<sup>83</sup> people related largely through ties of patrilineal descent, and organized into 99 families.<sup>84</sup> More than 40 per cent of the population (#304) currently living in Lojom was born in central Karamoja, in places such as Kangole and Mathany, where ‘traditional’ customs and ways of life were followed, up until the great famine of 1980<sup>85</sup> (see Chapter Three). Following the great famine, many Bokora families migrated and decided to build permanent settlements in areas where, for a long time, they used to only graze their animals during the dry season. Regarding land tenure, upon migration, these families transformed their grazing land rights into customary land rights.

On a smaller scale, Bokora family relatives are still continuing to migrate from central Karamoja to Iriiri, Lojom and neighbouring villages, causing a growth in population size, which has created great pressure and competition for land and natural resources. Despite the fact that Lojom is inhabited by families with a transhumant background, only 12 per cent of the population has left the village over time, which is a sign of the new patterns of sedentarization. While the Karamojong used to build a new settlement almost once every five years (Dyson-Hudson, 1966), 90 per cent of families have lived in Lojom for more than five years.

As illustrated in the map below (Map 3), Lojom is characterized by a well-defined enclosure, surrounded by a fence, with few, small gates to enter inside the village. The high fences made with thorns and shrubs are a clear sign of the historical insecurity in the area. Within the enclosure there are several circles. Each circle represents what I later define as a ‘sub-family unit’, with one wife plus her children (see Chapter Ten).

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<sup>83</sup> This is the total population that was living in Lojom at the time of the census conducted between January and March 2014. The breakdown of this figure by gender is 321 male and 387 female.

<sup>84</sup> See Chapter Two for the definition of family instead of household.

<sup>85</sup> Approximately the other half of the population (336#/47.12%) is born in Lojom and on average their age is almost four times lower (years: 8.46 VS 30.82) than those who are born in central Karamoja. This is a demonstration that Lojom is a relatively new settlement.

**Map 3: Lojom from the satellite**



Source: Map data@2016 Google

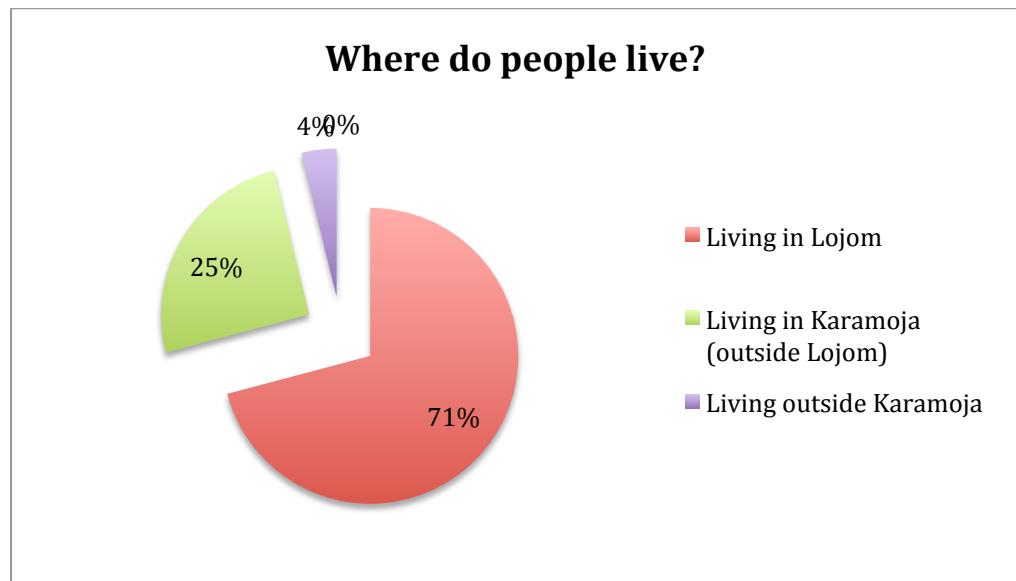
At the centre of the village there is an empty space that used to be the traditional cattle camp and that is presently used for village meetings, as well as for assessments and/or sensitization meetings by NGOs and aid agencies.

At the time of the 2014 census, 34 families were polygynous, 23 were female-headed families, and 42 were male-headed families (mono-nuclear). Being cross-sectional, this census study ‘freezes’ families in time and does not capture the important fact that most female-headed families were at some point in time part of polygynous families (see Chapter Ten), and that some of the current male-headed families will become polygynous as soon as the male family head<sup>86</sup> will be able to afford payment for another wife.

Interestingly, most (67.7%) of the families in Lojom have family members living outside the village (see definition of family in Chapter Two), the majority (77.6%) of whom live within the Karamoja region. Figure 1 below shows the different locations of the relatives of families living in Lojom.

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<sup>86</sup> Here after referred to simply as male head.

**Figure 1: Location of Lojom family members**

Source: Author's census survey

This is also remarkable because, traditionally, wives of polygynous families used to live in the same homestead as their husbands, whereas currently, in Lojom, 27 polygynous families out of 34 (79.4%) have at least one wife (41 wives in total) who lives outside the village.

Furthermore, according to the census, 37 per cent of all families in Lojom have at least one family member who has out-migrated from Karamoja. The main reasons for migration were mostly to work as a casual labourers (38%), to graze animals (19%), and as a consequence of the loss of animals (19%), mainly due to raiding. Following the improvement of security, subsequent to the forced disarmament exercise of 2006, insecurity was selected as a cause for migration by only 16 per cent of the respondents.

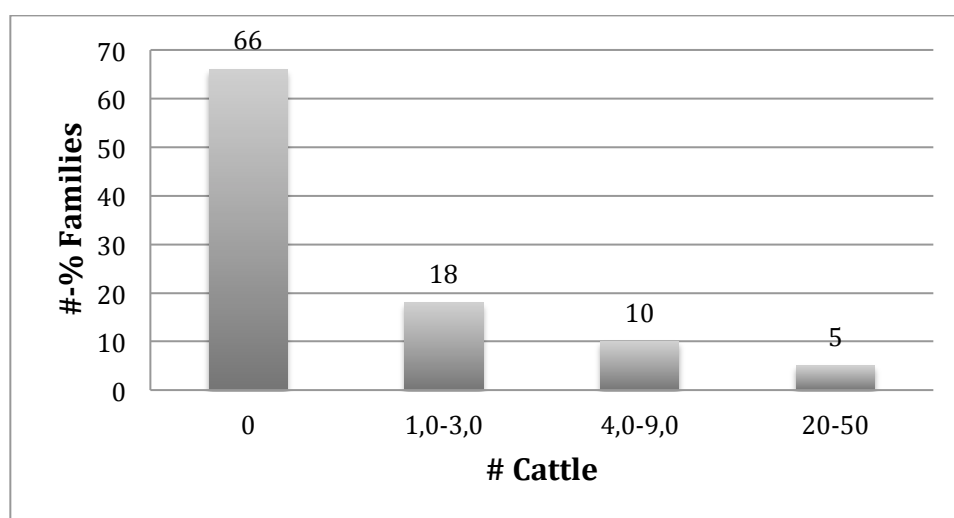
In Lojom, 25 families receive financial remittances, mainly from relatives (88.5%), and only three families receive remittances from friends (11.5%). The majority (64%) of those who send remittances to Lojom live outside Karamoja, and half of them live in the town of Busia, on the border with Kenya. While 67 families living in Lojom have family members (#293) living outside the village, both in Karamoja and elsewhere outside the region, only 25 families receive financial remittances from these family members.

### 4.1.2 Livestock ownership

In comparison to two generations ago, when almost every (97%) descendant of families in Lojom owned cattle, in present day Lojom, livestock production is a relatively marginal activity for many families, especially when it comes to livestock holdings. Presently, few inhabitants of Lojom are able to match the typical herd size of the previous generation.

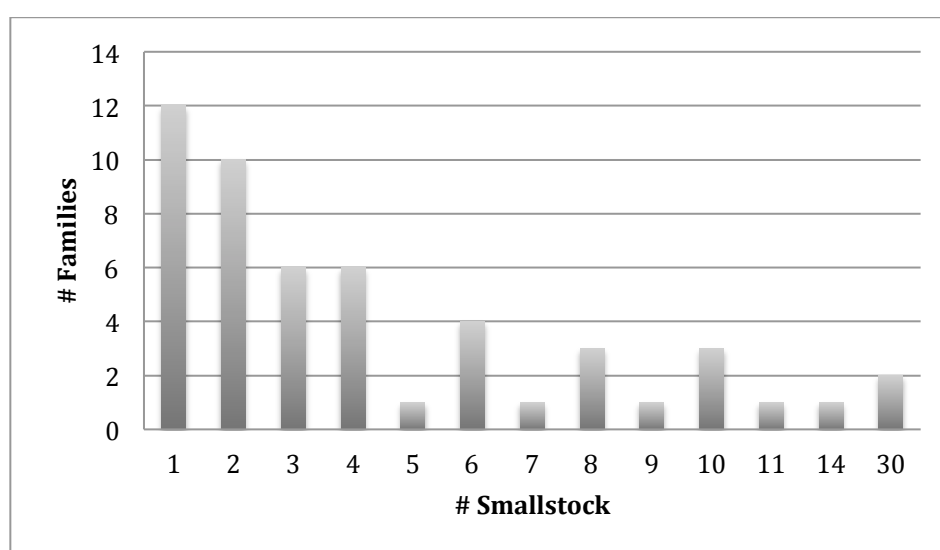
While Karamoja is often depicted by scholars and policy makers as a cattle-keeping society, in present day Lojom, 66 per cent of families do not even own a cow. Many of the families who currently live in the village have moved out of transhumant agro-pastoralism over the time span of two generations (see Chapter Three). In addition, if one looks at the few people who still own livestock (especially cattle), one can see how different the current system is in terms of production, accumulation and social reproduction (see Chapter Five). The table below (Table 1.2), shows how, in Lojom, only one in three families own cattle and most of the families who have cattle own very few.

**Table 1.2: Distribution of cattle in Lojom**



Source: Author's census survey

Half of the total families (51%) own smallstock, such as goats and sheep, but, as with the cattle, the distribution across the owners is uneven (see Table 1.3). Cattle and smallstock closely follow the same patterns of distribution, and the two assets correlate highly with each other.

**Table 1.3: Distribution of smallstock among owners**

Source: Author's census survey

Among the families who still own cattle and smallstock (respectively 33 per cent and 51 per cent), 13 of them rear and sell animals to earn a living, which is an activity that is mostly undertaken by men. The remaining families own livestock for their own consumption, for agricultural production, and for cultural needs (ceremonies, bridewealth and *ekicul*). In Lojom, livestock production revolves around agricultural production needs; for instance, the animals' seasonal grazing movements are decided in relation to the needs of agricultural production, and not *vice-versa*. Another element that displays the link between these two production systems is the fact that those families who own more cattle also own more ox-ploughs and, as I will show in Chapter Six, these families are able to produce larger harvests.

In the survey I conducted, questions related to the conditions of pasture and water for animals, access to livestock markets and veterinary services (see Appendix VI), surprisingly found more than half of the respondents (51.8%) without an opinion or information concerning these issues. This is in line with the fact that almost half of the population in Lojom is stockless, and that livestock production is, for many, an activity of people from the past generation. However, among the few livestock owners, the majority of them stated that the situation in terms of pasture, water and veterinary services in the area around Lojom is 'good', and that no major changes have occurred from the previous year (2012-2013).

### 4.1.3 Agriculture

Most of the residents of Lojom earn a living through a variety of economic activities such as cultivation, casual labour and the sale of natural resources and products (see Chapter Seven), and only a few families also undertake livestock management of both cattle and smallstock (see Chapter Five). Overall, the type of agriculture implemented in the area is subsistence farming based on low capital investment and highly labour-intensive activities.

The different economic activities are highly interrelated and dependant on the socio-economic characteristics of each family and the particular season, and the ways in which they have an impact on how each family earns a living varies significantly. For example, regarding agriculture, in the area of Iriiri, depending on the weather conditions, agricultural production fluctuates between one and two harvests a year.<sup>87</sup> Usually, important staple crops are gathered during the first harvest, and if there is a second harvest it is mainly of sunflowers and cassava.<sup>88</sup>

In terms of land tenure, a total of 93 families own land in Lojom, with 90 owning land under customary land titles, and three under formal land titles. Families who own land in Lojom access it primarily because they have inherited or received the land as a gift, a process that was followed by self-acquisition through clearing and purchasing. There are six families who do not own any land. Of those families who do not own any land, the majority (83.3%) access other people's land, with as many as half of them accessing land through renting others' land. In 2013, through a combination of free access and renting, these landless families were able to access some portions of land for cultivation.

Depending on the productivity of the plot of land – which is highly dependent on proximity to a reliable water source – the rental price varies significantly, usually between 20,000 and 40,000 Ugandan shillings (UGX) per acre, per farming season. The land is typically rented before the rainy season, between March and April, for one harvest only, after which it reverts to the original owner. Whereas land rental is presently practised by 12 per cent of families in Lojom, in the previous generation it

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<sup>87</sup> See the Agricultural Calendar in Appendix III.

<sup>88</sup> Interview with regional informant number #5 (see Appendix I).

was an almost non-existent practice<sup>89</sup> (see Table 2.1). Free exchange of land works through friends, relatives or simply through people land owners want to help. Sometimes land owners receive local beer (*kweete or kutu kutu*) in exchange, as a sign of appreciation (see Chapter Six).

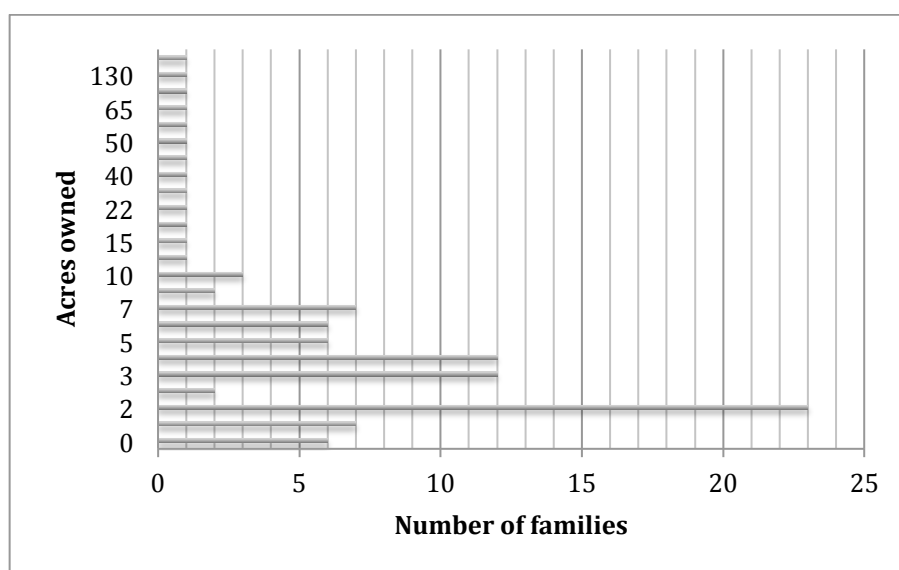
**Table 2.1: Access to land**

|                                      |     |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>Purchased</b>                     | 11% |
| <b>Inherited or received as gift</b> | 57% |
| <b>Leased-in</b>                     | 0%  |
| <b>Just walked in (cleared)</b>      | 25% |
| <b>No land</b>                       | 6%  |

Source: Author's census survey

In terms of distribution, most of the land-owning families own between two to four acres of land, while a few landowners own more than 12 acres. Table 2.2 shows the distribution of land in the village.

**Table 2.2: Relation between acres owned and number of families**



Source: Author's census survey

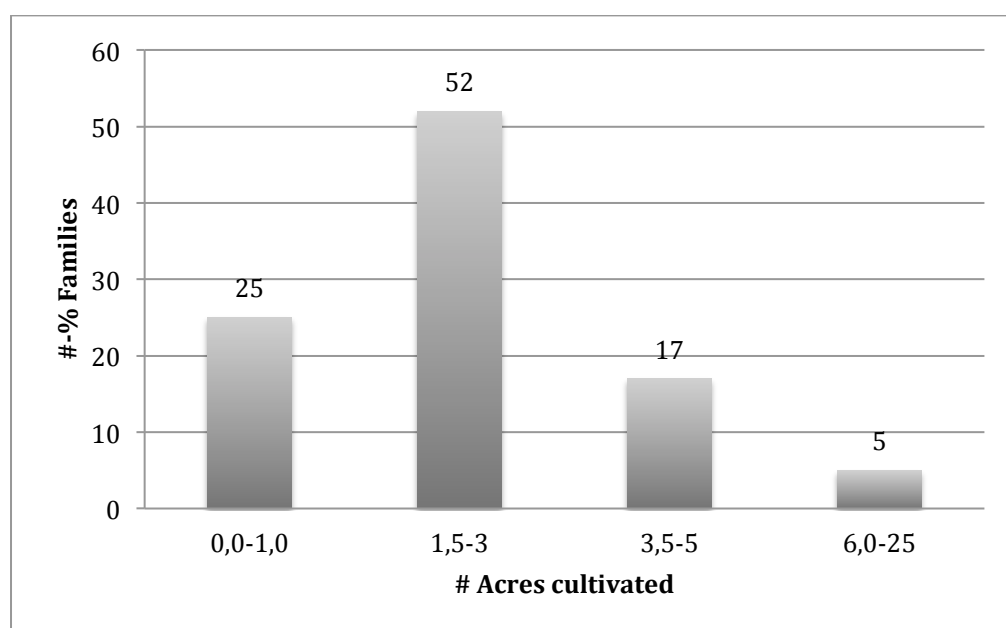
While recent migration is characterized by those families who moved to Iriiri and villages like Lojom in search of land to start farming, according to the farmers of Lojom the quality of the land varies considerably, and only a small proportion of the

<sup>89</sup> Interview with group discussion number #3 (see Appendix I).

land has been considered by farmers as ‘favourable’ for agricultural production. In particular, the 2014 census data shows that, in 2013, only 35 families farmed on a favourable site, and only eight per cent of the families had access to permanent water for farming purposes, in the vicinity of their land. This is a significant finding because those who farmed on a favourable site had an average harvest of 85.6 kg. of sorghum per family, while those who farmed on a non-favourable site had an average harvest of 34 kg. of sorghum. Similar outcomes emerged with other types of crops, such as maize, with 81.2 kg. versus 40.6 kg. produced in the different land sites.<sup>90</sup> Besides plots of land near permanent water sources being the most favourable, other plots were identified as favourable or not depending on the yearly conjectural rainfall distribution (see Chapter Six). Therefore, plots of land were considered favourable as long as they received rainfall in that particular year.

During the 2013 farming season, on average, a family in Lojom cultivated 2.8 acres of land, with the highest number of families cultivating only two acres. Table 3 shows the distribution of acres cultivated across all families.

**Table: 3 Relation between number of families and acres cultivated**



Source: Author's census survey

<sup>90</sup> As will be extensively analysed in Chapter Six, these are vanishingly small amounts of harvests due to the fact that 2013 was a year of near crop failure. However, an interesting finding of the present research has been that despite the very low production there was still a high level of differentiation amongst families in Lojom.



Data on farmers' production in Lojom shows a high degree of disparity between acres of land owned and actual acres of land cultivated. In the 2013 farming season, for instance, the majority (81.8%) of families farmed their own land and cultivated only 28 per cent of what they owned. It appears that it is more difficult for people in Lojom to cultivate all of the land they own than to gain access or ownership of land.

In terms of productivity, despite the fact that in the 2013 farming season almost everyone (98%) attempted to farm, if we focus on the most consumed local staple/food crops, such as sorghum and maize, we find that 12 families<sup>91</sup> experienced total crop failure, and the remaining 85 families, on average, experienced modest harvest outcomes. In fact, by looking at the average family production, sorghum harvest was 65.5 kg., while maize harvest was 89.2 kg. Considering the importance of the two types of crops in the village and the fact that, most of the time, these harvests have to last the entire year, these numbers show very low production.

As part of the census survey (see Appendix VI), we assessed families' food consumption over the week that preceded the interview. For each food item we indicated the source, as either coming from own production, purchase, food aid, gift or *leja-leja* (see Chapter Two). We then understood that, while the food basket<sup>92</sup> (see Appendix II) of the people living in Lojom is more varied than their production of maize and sorghum, production of core staples is not adequate to satisfy families' food needs. With limited farm production, and in the absence of food aid (which was not delivered during the period of the census), families found other routes to gain access to food for their own consumption needs.

When looking at the Lojom food basket, one is struck by the relatively minor role played by food aid on food consumption scores. If food aid had been available during the time of the census the outcome might have been significantly different. In analysing how people access the twelve most consumed types of food over the week prior to the census interview, the survey found primary access through market exchanges, secondary access through own production, and lastly, access through gifts

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<sup>91</sup> Twelve families did not harvest anything, of both sorghum and maize. However, this figure does not exclude families who decided not to cultivate sorghum and maize. I have assumed that due to the particular context of Lojom this possibility is quite rare.

<sup>92</sup> See Appendix VI.

from relatives and friends.<sup>93</sup> People partly overcome the insufficient quantity of food from their own production by selling natural products and their labour, and by using this income to buy food. However, in 2013, this diversified economy was not sufficient for most people, and the majority (96%) of the respondents stated that they suffered hunger every year, especially during the dry season. In fact, on average, most (76.8%) adults are used to having one meal a day, while most children (70.7%) are used to having two meals a day.

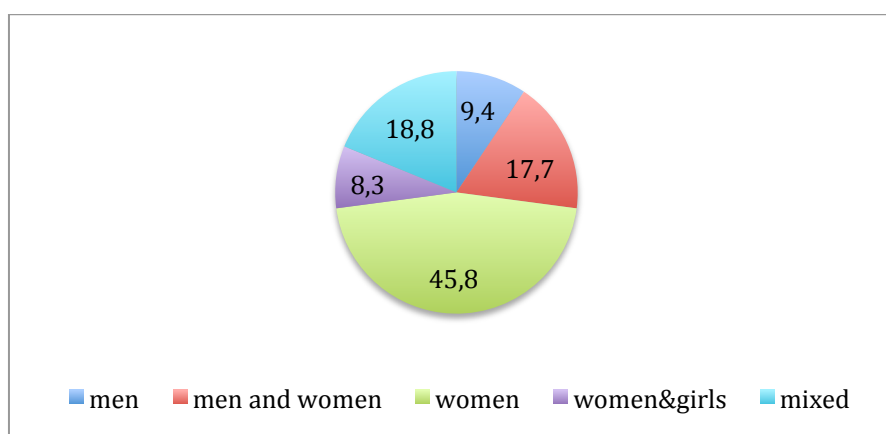
#### 4.1.4 Off-farm activities

The majority of people in Lojom earn a living through a diversified set of economic activities, such as farming, casual labour and the exploitation of natural resources, which contribute to each family's subsistence in different ways, depending on the season.

Employment opportunities link Lojom with the Iriiri trading centre. People from Lojom mainly find opportunities as construction workers in Iriiri, and Iriiri residents sometimes hire people from Lojom as wage farmers or workers for their gardens (see Chapter Seven). The labour that Lojom supplies to the labour market of the Iriiri sub-county is mainly casual labour that, in the local language, is called *leja-leja*. What is locally meant by *leja-leja* is a daily labour activity in exchange for money or food; for example, slashing someone's garden, off-loading trucks, or working on construction of the local government road. In fact, almost all families (97%) in Lojom have at least one family member who works as a *leja-leja*, the majority of which are women (79%). Figure 2 shows the most common labour combinations by gender within a family in Lojom, with the group constituted by women alone forming the highest percentage (45.8%), followed by the group made up of men and women together (17.7%).

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<sup>93</sup> Proportionally cash crops such as fruits, greens and sun flowers are mostly own produced.

**Figure 2: Gendered participation in *leja-leja* by family in (%)**

Source: Author's census survey

Iriiri is not a highly populated town, but its geographical position at the border with the Teso region, and the fact that one of the main roads for accessing central and northern Karamoja cuts through it, makes it a busy centre that is constantly traversed by trucks, buses and cars. Due to the predominantly isolated location, this busy road has become the main opportunity for many people living in the area to sell their local produce.

The economic activities outside of agricultural production that are crucial for Lojom's economy, such as trading labour power and natural resource products, result in a daily migration of the people living in the nearby villages, towards the town of Iriiri. Trading of natural resources is an important economic resource for Lojom and it is mainly based on the sale of charcoal, firewood and construction materials. People from Lojom, especially women, commute almost every day to the centre of Iriiri to sell bundles of firewood, sacks of charcoal or cups of local beer in order to buy salt, sugar and cooking oil at the market, which are all items they cannot produce themselves.

In particular, 71.7 per cent of the families in Lojom are involved in charcoal making, the majority of which is sold in Iriiri. The demand for charcoal comes from travellers who, before leaving the region, stop in Iriiri to buy sacks of charcoal, which are on average much cheaper compared to the rest of the country.<sup>94</sup> The same pattern occurs with the trading of firewood, which is, however, more gender-based, female work. 67.1 per cent of women living in Lojom, walk towards Mount Napak to collect

<sup>94</sup> There is a tax role according to which whenever charcoal is transported outside the region taxes have to be paid to the local revenue authority.

bundles of firewood every morning and sell it in the Iriiri trading centre. While the production of charcoal is mainly for the market, firewood is also used for home consumption. Every morning school children also have to bring some bundles of firewood to prepare the food delivered by the WFP. Lastly, the sale of construction materials, such as wooden poles and stones, is undertaken by 35.4 per cent of families and for this production as well the major players are women (45.7%).

Another income earning opportunity<sup>95</sup> (locally called *akidoldol*) is the making and selling of local brew (*kweete*). The sale of *kweete* has a strong local market both in the village and in Iriiri and it is therefore a major source of income. In Lojom, 73.7 per cent of families are beer producers, the majority of whom are women (84.9%). Beer is also one of the most important foods consumed by people in terms of kilocalories, therefore every family produces some for their own consumption as well.

While women are leaders in the trading of natural resources, men are highly involved as labour power for construction work (68.2%), in hunting and selling wild animals (73.7%), and in the management of livestock.

In the next section, I will discuss local understandings of social differentiation, which, due to the socio-economic transformation described in Chapter Three and portrayed in this chapter through the case study of Lojom, are presently more complex than in the past.

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<sup>95</sup> The term 'income generating/earning activity' was introduced by the NGOs and it is now part of the language in Karamoja.

## 4.2 Identifying and Describing Wealth Groups

### 4.2.1 Different perceptions of ‘wealth’ and ‘poverty’

Following the statistical description of the complex production system that shapes the present day economy of Lojom, the following section analyses local expressions and the historical evolution of the concepts of ‘wealth’ and ‘poverty’. Traditionally, among the Karimojong, the term used to describe a rich person was *Ngibaren*, which literally means ‘wealth in cattle’. In Iriiri and Lojom, currently, the term used is *Ekabaran*,<sup>96</sup> which means a wealthy person and does not necessarily relate to the possession of animals. The same pattern has occurred with the term used to reference a poor person, traditionally *Akulyakanu* or *Ebulyoit*, which means ‘without animals’, and presently *Ekulyakit*, which means a poor person, without any attachment to, or lacking, animals.

Despite changes in local understanding and perceptions of ‘wealth’ and ‘poverty’, throughout group and individual discussions, many people continued to refer to the possession of animals, especially cattle, as one of the major criteria in defining ‘wealth’. However, the contemporary understanding of ‘wealth’ is more complex and diversified than before. The transformations in local understandings and perceptions of ‘wealth’ and ‘poverty’ are connected to the changing modes of production, accumulation and social reproduction that have occurred to the Bokora people since the 1980s (see Chapter Three).

Interviews conducted both in Lojom and across the region also show how perceptions of ‘wealth’ and ‘poverty’ are also contingent on the age, gender and location of each individual. Throughout discussions, depending on the age or generation of each participant, there was an almost constant disagreement on the importance of animal ownership as a criterion to define ‘wealth’. Broadly speaking, most of the elderly were still attached to the traditional idea of ‘wealth’ being related to the ownership of livestock. According to them, in order for any person to be considered wealthy there also has to be an initiation (*asapan*) into power (*akitopolor*),

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<sup>96</sup> As a point of reference, I used the first Karimojong dictionary ever written in 1973 by one of the first Combonian missionaries (Felice Farina) who lived among the Karimojong. It is interesting to note that in giving an example of *ekabaran* in his dictionary, Farina mentions the Indian traders who lived in Moroto, before being expelled by Idi Amin (Farina, 1973).

under customary arrangements.<sup>97</sup> The latter is the traditional idea according to which 'power' and 'wealth' are two inseparable concepts, traditionally, referred to with the term *ngikaburak*. As Dyson-Hudson (1966) found,

[...] wealthy men are able to exert influence over others of equal age ranking in several ways. They have many wives, who generally come from large descent groups (whose bridewealth demands only the wealthy can meet). They can thus call on the support of large affinal groups. In addition they usually have several grown sons of their own, formal friends through stock exchange, and possibly dependants through clientship. (Dyson-Hudson 1966: 222)

Presently, in Lojom the *ekabaran* are consistently named *ekapolon*, meaning the Big Man, chief, king, and 'leader in the battle'. In group discussions, words for 'wealthy' and 'powerful' individuals were used synonymously.

By contrast, young people in their twenties are more sceptical about traditional understandings of 'wealth' and 'power'. In fact, according to them, 'possessing many animals is no longer the only criteria to understand wealth.'<sup>98</sup> Young people referred more to the so-called 'western' signs of 'wealth', such as owning a car, working for an NGO, and having a permanent house in the town. In addition, among young people, the number of children going to school is on average much higher compared to their parents' generation (see Chapter Eight), which results in different levels of formal education between the youth and the elderly. In relation to 'wealth' these educational differences cause two major issues with disagreements on 'where power resides', between traditional/informal and formal power, and different perspectives on what 'wealth' is. For instance, for the youth, a person owning many head of cattle, who is initiated and illiterate, will not be considered as wealthy and powerful as the local district county chief.

This difference in perception of wealth is also related to the fact that the level of formal education varies by location. Traditional understandings of 'wealth', for instance, are more supported among people living in rural villages such as Lojom, whereas more 'western' understandings of 'wealth' are more common in urban

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<sup>97</sup> A full discussion on *asapan* can be found later on in the chapter.

<sup>98</sup> Interview with group discussion number #10 (see Appendix I).

settings such as the Iriiri centre.<sup>99</sup> It was interesting to hear the perception of a young, educated woman working for a local NGO and living in Iriiri, talking about women living in villages:

By growing up in the village, where men do their own things while women have to cook, staying around the home, not going out, it happens that the moment they see you moving out to town they start calling you *amalaya* [prostitute]. People, especially women, do not know other ways of survival apart from going to the mountain, pick firewood go and sell it and get the little money and buy beans to take home. This is a vicious circle of poverty. This happens to children as well, and this routine it won't change unless all the people migrate to town. In sum, what many people miss in the village is lack of exposure and high level of ignorance.<sup>100</sup>

Measuring wealth has generally always been a complex exercise among pastoralists (Anderson and Broch-Due, 1999), more so in a society in transition such as Karamoja, where both 'traditional' and 'western' understandings and perceptions of wealth co-exist together with different meanings across different generations, locations, and levels of formal education. In the next section, I will go through the analysis of this complexity and stratify the village of Lojom into different social classes.

#### **4.2.2 Qualitative discussions during the wealth ranking exercise**

Before exploring patterns of wealth differentiation in more depth, it is worth looking at the most appropriate local criteria to differentiate people in terms of 'wealth' and 'poverty'. As described earlier in Chapter Two, three meetings were held with the same participants – male elders, youth and women, both educated and non-educated – all from the village of Lojom.<sup>101</sup> During group discussions, participants defined what 'wealth' and 'poverty' are using their own terms and understandings, and then established general criteria to identify families belonging to different wealth groups (Grandin, 1983).

The first criterion they introduced was livestock holdings, especially cattle, which was ranked as one of the crucial proxies to wealth. Secondly, they introduced the criterion of land, in particular the number of acres owned and the quantity of acres

<sup>99</sup> Interview with case study number #1 (see Appendix I).

<sup>100</sup> Interview with group discussion number #6 (see Appendix I).

<sup>101</sup> For more information refer to the methodology section in Chapter Two.

cultivated. The latter was considered equally important to livestock holdings. While quantity of money was understood as a critical factor to identify who is wealthy, it was ranked as the last criteria, as participants noted that it was difficult to measure. During group discussions, participants affirmed: ‘we know who has money but we do not know how much they have, while for land and animals we see what they have.’<sup>102</sup> The attention then switched to the different levels of consumption as a proxy for the amount of money. Participants gave several examples, such as a wealthy man at the animal market of Iriiri buying 10 head of cattle, and a poor man buying only one sheep.

Other proxies of wealth and welfare were identified, such as the type of house owned, either permanent or semi-permanent, and the total number of houses owned. Types and number of private transport owned, such as motorbikes and bicycles, were also indicated as signs of the possibility of high expenditure. In relation to levels of consumption, women in particular highlighted the diversity in the type of diet of each family as a sign of wealth. In Lojom, for instance, on average, people eat beans and *posho* (local polenta), and if someone also eats meat and rice, they are considered wealthier.<sup>103</sup> Certainly someone is to be considered wealthy if she or he buys a jerry can of cooking oil instead of a small plastic bag, and if she or he goes to *Kawempe*, the local restaurant in Iriiri, and eats meat, while someone less wealthy eats *posho* and beans. A wealthy person also drinks beer in bottles every day, or drinks *kweete* at home.<sup>104</sup>

There were disagreements on whether the level of formal education was a sign of wealth. According to some participants, acquiring formal education is a way to eventually escape from poverty and be able to one day buy a car (see Chapter Eight). For others, it is difficult to make generalizations because it depends on the importance a person assigns to formal education. For example, a wealthy head of family may decide to send all his children to cultivate his gardens and herd his animals, instead of sending them to school.

Throughout group discussions there was a recurring theme emerging: the non-material dimension of ‘wealth’ and ‘poverty’. For instance participants affirmed that

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<sup>102</sup> Interview with group discussion number #10 (see Appendix I).

<sup>103</sup> Interview with group discussion number #6 (see Appendix I).

<sup>104</sup> Interview with group discussion number #10 (see Appendix I).



very poor families do not own anything but, in addition, ‘they do not want to work because they are lazy.’ This, according to them, is the major characteristic of those who are very poor. Not owning anything is due to destitution, but what makes the living conditions of some families worse is their ‘laziness’ in relation to trying to overturn their economic condition. These kinds of families were described as living from begging, which, according to participants, worsens poverty. On the contrary, there are poor people who do not own anything but are identified as hardworking people. For instance, they work as a *leja-leja* in someone’s garden and with the money they make they either buy food or rent out a garden, which they cultivate in order to make a living. Lastly, widows and orphans were not necessarily perceived as the most destitute or vulnerable people.

Following these discussions, together with the participants, we summarized the local criteria to differentiate people in terms of ‘wealth’ and ‘poverty’ into three major themes: 1) production and assets; 2) consumption and expenditure; and 3) perceptions (see Chapter Two). Table 4 below summarizes the agreed upon wealth criteria for Lojom.

**Table 4: Agreed wealth criteria**

Production and assets

- Number of animals owned - both head of cattle and small stock
- Number of acres of land cultivated
- Number of houses owned

Consumption and expenditure

- Type of house owned - permanent or semi-permanent
- Type of private means owned (and quantity)
- Type of diet

Perceptions

- Capable of farsightedness
- Wise
- Good reputation (a good name and being known)
- Hardworking/active

Local criteria to define ‘wealth’ and ‘poverty’ were based on both these material and immaterial concepts, understandings and perceptions. In the next section,

in order to understand wealth stratification in Lojom, I will use this wealth ranking in combination with the census survey (see Table 6).

#### 4.2.3 Wealth stratification and general description of wealth groups

Following local definitions of ‘wealth’ and ‘poverty’, the population of Lojom was stratified in terms of wealth and well-being. While the words *Ekabaran* and *Ekulykait* are used among the Karimojong to identify the ‘better off’, and the ‘very poor’, local words for other wealth groups do not exist. However, for the purpose of the analysis presented here, references to four wealth groups with English names will be used: better off, middle, poor, and very poor.<sup>105</sup> Table 5 below shows the number of families allocated under each wealth group and the family size in each group.<sup>106</sup>

**Table 5: Breakdown of families and family size for each wealth group**

| Wealth Groups     | #/% Families | Family size | Family size<br>living in Lojom |
|-------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Better off</b> | 4            | 144         | 60                             |
| <b>Middle</b>     | 13           | 118         | 86                             |
| <b>Poor</b>       | 56           | 498         | 386                            |
| <b>Very poor</b>  | 26           | 240         | 176                            |

Source: Author’s census survey

Once inhabitants of Lojom identified whose family belongs to which wealth group (wealth ranking), I analysed the survey data for the same family sample. The data contained in the next table (Table 6) confirms the wealth ranking exercise as a reliable method to differentiate people in terms of relative wealth. Beyond the locally agreed criteria,<sup>107</sup> this summary analysis also suggests other criteria that presented a high degree of correlation with wealth criteria, such as number of wives married. Some indicators did not show a linear relationship with the wealth ranking exercise, especially between the groups of the poor and very poor, and the differences between some indicators of the better off and the middle groups are also not strongly correlated. Nevertheless, wealth rankings are highly correlated with many indicators

<sup>105</sup> For more information about the wealth ranking exercise refer to Chapter Two in the methodology section.

<sup>106</sup> In the course of the thesis it will be clearer why it is important to include the family size for each wealth group as well.

<sup>107</sup> See Table 4 p. 105.

such as livestock holdings, acres cultivated, crops harvested, number of wives married, and number of houses owned in Iriiri. Table 6 highlights the families' socio-economic characteristics by each wealth group.

**Table 6: Average of family characteristics by wealth groups**

| Families' Characteristics                   | Standard Deviation | Better off (N=4) | Middle (N=13) | Poor (N=56) | Very poor (N=26) |
|---|--------------------|------------------|---------------|-------------|------------------|
| Time lived in Lojom in years                | 8.8                | 20.3             | 8.7           | 7.8         | 9.1              |
| Number of cattle owned                      | 2.3                | 24               | 3.3           | 1.5         | 0.2              |
| Number of small stock owned                 | 2.7                | 18.5             | 2.7           | 2           | 1.4              |
| Number of acres of land owned               | 10.2               | 66.2             | 10            | 7.8         | 6.8              |
| Number of acres cultivated in 2013          | 2.8                | 18               | 2.8           | 2.1         | 2                |
| Maize harvested in 2013 in Kg               | 55.4               | 550              | 46.2          | 39.5        | 16.4             |
| Sorghum harvested in 2013 in Kg             | 52.8               | 240              | 81.7          | 30.7        | 54.4             |
| Cassava harvested in 2013 in Kg             | 48.5               | 800              | 5.7           | 23.1        | 9.1              |
| Number of houses owned                      | 3.4                | 16               | 3.6           | 2.8         | 2.6              |
| Children education                          | 1.2                | 1.8              | 1.2           | 1.2         | 1.3              |
| Number of wives per husband (including FHH) | 1.8 (1.5)          | 6                | 2.7 (1.6)     | 1.5 (1.3)   | 1.5 (1.1)        |
| Number of relatives per family              | 10.1               | 36               | 9.2           | 8.9         | 9.2              |
| Number child meals a day                    | 2.0                | 2.3              | 2.5           | 1.9         | 1.8              |
| Number adult meals a day                    | 1.3                | 1.5              | 1.8           | 1.2         | 1.1              |
| % families receiving remittances            | 25.3               | 0                | 23.1          | 16.1        | 50               |
| % polygynous                                | 34.3               | 100              | 46.2          | 32.1        | 23.1             |
| % families receiving free food aid          | 44.4               | 75               | 15.4          | 41.1        | 61.5             |
| % families initiated                        | 14.1               | 75               | 0             | 12.5        | 15.4             |
| % families making/selling charcoal          | 71.7               | 25               | 53.8          | 75          | 80.8             |
| % families owning houses in Iriiri          | 13.1               | 100              | 23.1          | 8.9         | 3.8              |
| % female-headed families                    | 24.2               | 0                | 46.2          | 12.5        | 38.5             |
| % families cultivating in fertile land      | 35.4               | 75               | 38.5          | 33.9        | 30.8             |

Source: Author's census survey

As previously mentioned, there are many unquantifiable local indicators that have contributed to the development of this wealth stratification, such as having a

good name, being well known, and being a hardworking person. These non-material indicators will feature in the analysis of the following chapters, whereas in the next section, I will elaborate on the discussion of the socio-economic characteristics of each wealth group.

### **First Wealth Group: Better Off**

In Lojom, only four families have been identified under the wealth group of ‘the better off.’ By correlating the families who have been identified as part of the better off group with the census data of the same sample, it appears that these families respond to a traditional understanding of ‘wealth’ and ‘power’. In particular, these families are all male-headed, polygynous families (each man may have up to six wives) with many children. Three families are linked to important lineage connections, whereas two families occupy important institutional and political roles within the sub-county of Iriiri. Men of this wealth group show leadership both in the sub-county as well as in their extended family. In fact, they generally paid substantial bridewealth as their wives mainly come from large descent groups (see both Chapters Three and Five).

Most (75%) of them have been initiated to power (*asapan*), and therefore meet the cultural and social requirements for being the next ruling class (*akitopolor*). The *asapan* is a traditional ceremony through which an age group of males acquires the status of initiated to ‘leadership’ within their respective communities. The *akitopolor* is when the generation set of those in power retires, usually during peaceful and prosperous years, and the following generation of *asapan* is promoted to be the next ruling class. Power is also handed over to new generations when there remain only a few individuals in the ruling class and there is a need to replace them in order to ensure local governance. Through these ceremonies, elders pass on their leadership to the younger generations, resulting in the hierarchical system of gerontocracy.<sup>108</sup>

At present, men who belong to this wealth group are also named *ekabaka*. This is a Luganda word borrowed from central Uganda (inhabited by the Baganda ethnic group) that means ‘king’. An *ekabaka* is wealthy to the point that he will never be directly involved in any kind of work in his life and he will always be able to pay someone to do work on his behalf.

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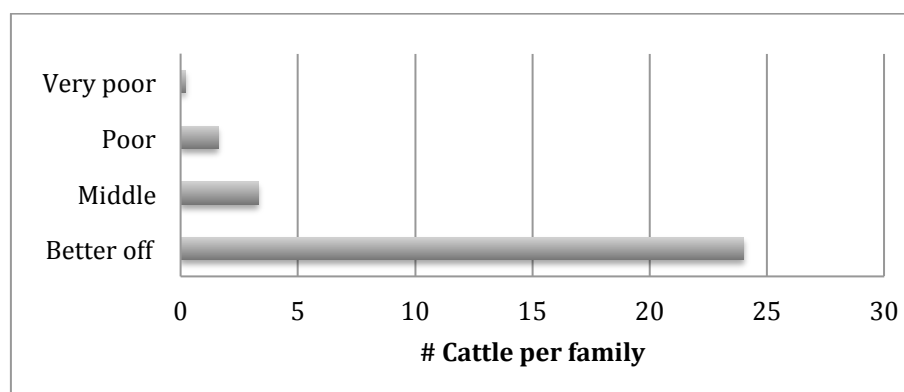
<sup>108</sup> Interview with group discussion number #4 (see Appendix I).

Within this group strong patriarchal relations exist between husbands and wives (see Chapter Ten). This aspect influences the economy, whereby men belonging to the better off group appear as ‘managers’ who make economic decisions, such as allocating family members in the labour force, transferring assets, and engaging in other financial activities (ibid.). Furthermore, these families are highly connected with the town of Iriiri, all of them owning houses in Lojom and at least one house in the Iriiri trading centre (see Chapter Seven). These men spend much of their time in town, while their wives mostly stay in Lojom and other rural villages.

While there are only four families within this group, their family size is much larger compared to other wealth groups. These families represent four per cent of the families living in Lojom, but their families make up 14 per cent of the total population.

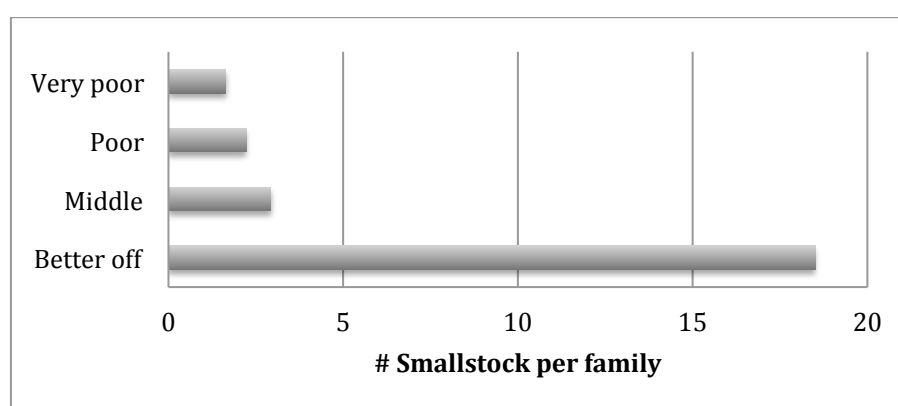
The head of the village, Adupinkal, is the richest and most powerful person in Lojom and the Iriiri sub-county, and his brother Ewapet is also in the wealth group of the better off. Men in this group are the lead pastoralists in the village, both in terms of total livestock owned and produced. In particular, the better off group owns 42.5 per cent of the cattle wealth in Lojom, averaging at 24 head of cattle per family. Table 7.1 shows the distribution of cattle across the four wealth groups.

**Table 7.1: Cattle/family for each wealth group**



Source: Author's census survey

Although for smallstock the distribution across the wealth groups is slightly less uneven, on average, families in this wealth group own 18.5 smallstock per family. Table 7.2 below shows the distribution of smallstock across the four groups.

**Table 7.2: Smallstock/family for each social class**

Source: Author's census survey

The difference of the current wealth group with the previous generation is that these wealthy families are now also leaders in agricultural production. An average of 18 acres of land is cultivated by each family, either with a tractor (their own or rented) and/or a plough drawn by their own oxen (see Chapter Six).<sup>109</sup> Unsurprisingly, their production in terms of kilogrammes of sorghum and maize harvested is much higher compared to the other wealth groups. In the 2013 farming season, they cultivated one fourth of the total acres they own (27.2%). This figure is particularly surprising considering that during the last farming season none of them rented land, rented out land, or had free access to someone else's land.<sup>110</sup> The finding shows farmers' low investments and expectations for the agricultural season of 2013.

### **Second Wealth Group: Middle**

While the wealth group of the better off displays a combination of traditional modes of production and association with 'newer' and 'emerging' assets in agricultural production and business in town, the middle group displays a high number of female-headed families (42.9%), which are often portrayed as the most vulnerable families. Traditionally, widows in Karamoja were inherited by the family of the husband's brother (*levirate*), with the widow and her children merging with another family. Currently, cases of *levirate* are diminishing and the existence of permanent female-headed families stands testimony to a new form of family development (see Chapter

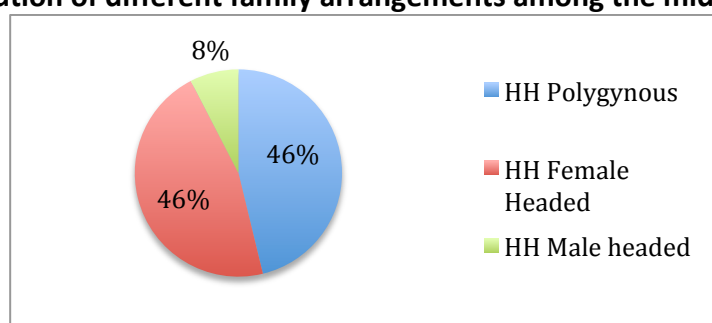
<sup>109</sup> All the families of this social class possess at least one ox-plough.

<sup>110</sup> Only one family out of four (25%) gave out its land for free (4 acres), thus making the ration land owned/land cultivated eventually higher.

Ten). It is worth mentioning again that this census freezes family structures in time and cannot capture the important fact that most female-headed families were at some point polygynous.

However, in the middle group, like in the better off group, the most common type of family structure remains the polygynous one (46.2%), and there is only one male-headed family (8%). Figure 3 shows the distribution of the different family structures within Lojom's middle group.

**Figure 3: Distribution of different family arrangements among the middle group**



Source: Author's census survey

With regards to the overall socio-economic performance of the middle group, the relatively high number of female-headed families results in three major outcomes: relatively few families who are initiated as well as occupying formal power positions, low livestock production, and higher income from off-farm activities. Given that initiation is a male ritual for heads of families, because of the many female-headed families, the level of initiation in this group is low (only 15.4%). In fact, if we discard the female-headed families, the percentage of initiated families in the middle group is almost double (28.6%).

In the middle group, livestock ownership is modest, with each family owning, on average, three head of cattle and three smallstock. This average is negatively affected once again by the high number of female-headed families that, following tradition, do not get directly involved in livestock holdings. These outcomes reinforce the idea that livestock holdings is still a male affair, as it was in the past (see Chapter Three), and that most of the livestock wealth belongs to polygynous families. Among cattle owners in this group, there is only one family that has a large herd and it is the family of the son of the head of the village (Adupinkal).

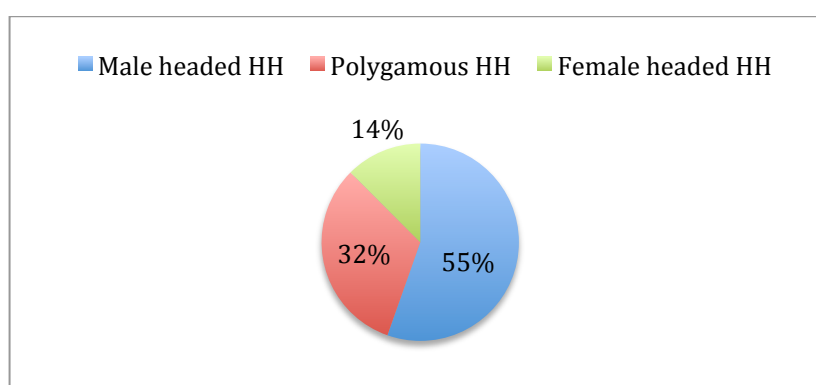
Families in this group cannot afford a tractor to plough their own gardens but because they own some oxen, they cultivate using an ox-plough. In particular, half of the families (53.8%) own cattle, and another 30.8 per cent of them received free use of oxen and ploughs during the last farming season.<sup>111</sup> In 2013 families in this group cultivated 28 per cent of the land they owned and did not rent any of their land out. For instance, if they owned 10 acres they cultivated 2.8 acres. Considering that 30 per cent of these families gave out land for free, it is expected that the ratio of acres owned versus the acres cultivated is lower in this group.

To summarize, families belonging to this group include either ex-wives once part of rich polygynous families, or younger relatives of better off families living in Lojom or elsewhere.

### Third Wealth Group: Poor

The 'poor' category is the largest wealth group in Lojom, with 56 families, representing the majority of the people living in the village. More than half of them are male-headed families (mono-nuclear), followed by polygynous families, and lastly by female-headed families. Figure 4 shows the distribution in percentages of the different family arrangements within the group.

**Figure 4: Distribution of different family arrangements**



Source: Author's census survey

Similarly to the other wealth groups, poor families also make a living through a combination of different economic activities, but their production relations compared to the wealthier groups are significantly different. Poor families generally show low

<sup>111</sup> The response referred to the period of twelve months prior conducting the census, therefore, between January 2013 and January 2014.



performance both in agricultural and livestock production; specifically they are below Lojom averages in terms of agricultural production, acres cultivated and livestock holdings.<sup>112</sup> This low performance is in relation to village averages, which are consistent across a variety of other indicators.

What differs in each wealth group is the total number of family members that sell their labour power. Most of the poor families in Lojom have at least one family member who sells his/her labour power, while family members belonging to wealthier groups mainly work for their heads of families, cultivate their own land, and use their own means of production. Among the poor and very poor groups, most family members do not cultivate their own land or work for their own business, and they are mostly employed as casual labourers (*leja-leja*). Dependence on the market to buy food is another finding that reinforces the importance of *leja-leja* to make a living. Overall, this labour differentiation gives insight into how production relations differ in each wealth group, and this is a major theme that will be developed in the next chapters.

The few acres cultivated by each family in this wealth group (an average of 2.1 acres)<sup>113</sup> also suggests how poor families spend most of their time working for someone else rather than working in their own gardens. For instance, women tend to be so overloaded with work that it is hard for them to cultivate more than two acres of land each season. This finding was also confirmed by how people perceive families belonging to this group, compared to the very poor. In group discussions, poor families were considered hardworking people and they were defined as proactive in trying to help themselves, while the very poor were portrayed as 'hopeless', 'lazy' people. Some participants named the families belonging to the poor group *ekukurana*, which literally means 'hard working people' and generally means people who are willing and able to perform any job, are highly committed, and who village members can rely on.<sup>114</sup>

Ultimately, this state of affairs shows the right allocation of these families under the poor group. By analysing both the perceptions of the people attending the group discussions and the census data, one can see that in terms of several

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<sup>112</sup> See Table 6 p. 107 for the overall socio-economic picture by each wealth group.

<sup>113</sup> Poor families owned land but during the last farming season (2013) they cultivated only one fourth of what they possessed (26.6%) and ten per cent of them rented-in land because their land was not fertile.

<sup>114</sup> Interview with group discussion number #10 (see Appendix I).

indicators<sup>115</sup> there is no major ‘material’ difference between poor and very poor families in Lojom. The main difference between the poor and very poor is in terms of cattle holdings, with poor families owning some head of cattle, on average 1.5 head of cattle, and 2 smallstock for each family.

#### **Fourth Wealth Group: Very poor**

Almost one fourth of the total families in Lojom have been identified as very poor. These families display the lowest figures across different socio-economic indicators.<sup>116</sup> In terms of livestock holdings only one family out of 26 owns cattle and two families out of 26 own smallstock. Nevertheless, the majority of very poor families have been cut off from the pastoral economy for a long time.

Overall, the majority of very poor families cannot survive independently and struggle every day to secure their subsistence. During group discussions participants referred to the families belonging to this wealth group as *akayaran* (for women) and *ekayaran* (for men), which literally means being ‘under the protection of someone.’ According to the participants ‘people who belong to this category are neither able to think about the future nor can they choose and advise.’<sup>117</sup> Their lives are based on daily survival struggles, with the major differences between the poor and the very poor being their ability and potential in future planning.

About 80 per cent of the very poor families are involved in making and selling charcoal, which is the highest figure of charcoal producers across all the wealth groups. In terms of agricultural production, in 2013, these families farmed in the least fertile land in Lojom and harvested the lowest amount in kilogrammes of maize. They cultivated an average of two acres of land, which was not enough to meet family food needs from own production. This finding was also confirmed by food security indicators that show the lowest figures across the groups, with children having 1.8 meals a day and adults having 1.1.

Due to their precarious living conditions, these families were among the most supported in the village, both by other people and by humanitarian organizations (see

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<sup>115</sup> See Table 6 p. 106 for the overall socio-economic picture by each wealth group.

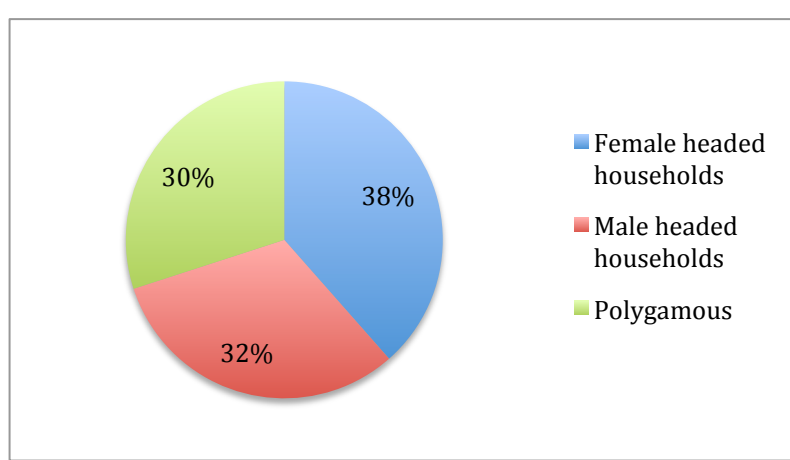
<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Interview with group discussion number #10 (see Appendix I).

Chapter Nine). This finding was also consolidated by the fact that half of the very poor families receive financial remittances, thus making them the highest recipient group; a sign of the relatively good level of solidarity, especially between relatives, with growing needs being met with growing remittances. In addition, 61.5 per cent of the very poor, in the twelve months before the survey, received free food aid at least once, which is the highest percentage across the four groups.

Figure 5 shows the distribution in percentages of the different family arrangements within the group, with an even distribution of types.

**Figure 5: Distribution of different family arrangements**



Source: Author's census survey

In summary, Table 8 below shows the major socio-economic characteristics of the four wealth groups in Lojom. However, this summary does not show the social relations of production between the four groups and within families, which will be the argument of the next chapters.

**Table 8: Summary of socio-economic characteristic by wealth group**

| Wealth groups               | Socio-economic characteristics  |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>Better off<br/>(N=4)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping large herds</li> <li>• All polygynous (large bridewealth)</li> <li>• Traditionally initiated</li> <li>• Husbands residence in Iriiri and business/trading in town</li> <li>• Wives and children residence in Lojom and other villages</li> <li>• Recipient and controller of formal aid</li> </ul> |

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>Middle<br/>(N=13)</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many female-headed families, mostly wives of ex-rich polygynous husbands</li> <li>• Amongst male heads half of them are a cluster of affines also related to the better off group</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Poor<br/>(N=56)</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farm owned small gardens</li> <li>• Keep few livestock</li> <li>• Own food production is supplemented with selling natural resources and labour power for different economic activities</li> </ul>                                     |
| <b>Very poor<br/>(N=26)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lowest possession of different assets</li> <li>• Cut-off from the pastoral economy</li> <li>• Receive remittances</li> <li>• 80% sale charcoal</li> <li>• Lowest food security indicators</li> <li>• Recipients of food aid</li> </ul> |

#### 4.2.4 Discussion on social classes

The wealth ranking exercise combined with the census survey has enabled me to stratify the families of Lojom via indicators chosen by the respondents, and to identify important correlations that, in part, explain the stratification (see Chapter Two). This methodology does not, however, shed light on the underlying reasons why one family is wealthier or poorer than another as well as why one family stays wealthier or poorer over time. In Lojom, the wealth ranks are not simple wealth groups or socio-economic categories, they are social classes or ‘emerging fractions of the peasantry’ (Comaroff and Comaroff, 1997: 152), formed through dynamic agrarian social relations (see Chapter Six).

What is missing in wealth stratification is the understanding of the different production relations between and within families belonging to the four wealth groups, which eventually explain the reproduction of the strong social polarization that occurs in Lojom. While the inhabitants of Lojom seemed very well aware of who comprises the wealthy and destitute people in the village – as well as where they themselves

stand in the ranking – they did not identify themselves as members of a class structured society, which includes reproduction of social relationships over time (Kalb, 2015). As Meillassoux (1973) pointed out,

[...] once we have a social structure where one corporate group dominates and exploits other corporate groups we are dealing with a class system in which the above rules of social relationships will change again with the change of the productive relations. (Meillassoux, 1973: 88)

Over the course of the next chapters, I will show how these wealth groups are in fact part of different social relations, which reproduce the observed stratification between and within families over time. A relational perspective on agrarian change, rooted in an understanding of class, gender and generation, helps us move from a static understanding to a more dynamic one (see Chapter One). The formation of classes through processes of commodification, interaction with urbanisation, economic diversification and other processes of development present in Lojom, intersect with other pre-existing social structures. Both Jean and John Comaroff (1997) observed how, in South Africa:

to begin with, relations among these classes-in-information were often ambiguous, rendered even more so by the intricate lines of kinship, affinity, and political affiliation that cross-cut them. (Comaroff and Comaroff, 1997: 161)

This thesis will show how the incidence of class relations in Lojom intersects with other social structures, such as 'kinship', 'patronage' and 'patriarchy'. Social differentiation and class formation in Lojom have to also be understood in relation to wider changes in the political economy of the region, including relationships between rural villages such as Lojom and emerging towns such as Iriiri. This shows how the processes of agrarian and livelihood change occurring in Lojom are intimately connected to larger social and political economic processes occurring elsewhere, which are also introduced through external intervention (see Chapters Three, Eight and Nine).

## Conclusion

This analysis shows that the group of the better off is made up of four families only, but due to the large size of these families they proportionally represent 14 per cent of the population of Lojom. These local elite families embody traditional notions of 'wealth' and are linked to both political and lineage connections, in a context of growing market opportunities. Their leadership in livestock production is the base from which male heads diversify their economic activities and accumulate further wealth, especially through businesses in the town of Iriiri. They are also engaged in agricultural production, but not as a major economic activity. The better off class could thus be identified as the classic 'rural capitalist' (cf. Bernstein, 2010) class, made up of four 'Big Men', who are actually the ones most bound to state politics and non-governmental aid.

The middle class, which is made of 13 families, is composed of farmworkers who link their production to external sources of income in the town of Iriiri, through the trading of natural resources and labour. While half of the families are female-headed, mostly composed by the ex-wives of wealthy polygynous husbands (or Big Men), some of the male family heads are a cluster of younger affines related to the better off class living in Lojom and elsewhere, and they constitute potential new Big Men.

The poor class is formed by 56 families and it is the most populated one. These families have been dispossessed of their livestock over time and presently undertake several and different economic activities to secure their means of subsistence. Due to their low agricultural production, which is not enough for subsistence, the largest source of income for this group comes from selling both natural products/commodities and labour power for farm and off-farm activities in the town of Iriiri and the surrounding villages. This class is essentially a 'rural peasant' as Henry Bernstein (2010) calls it, but differently from the classical definition of rural peasant, with this class, the selling of labour power in exchange for wages is alone not enough to secure subsistence.

The last class is the very poor and it is made up of 26 families, whose daily lives are centred on survival strategies. The major sources of their livelihood are either

relief aid, financial remittances from relatives living in Busia, and occasional profits from the sale of charcoal at the market. They are 'too poor to farm' (cf. Whitehead, 1999) and, according to the people of Lojom, they are always dependent on others for their survival.

Despite local discussions on the importance of particular competencies for wealth accumulation, such as being hardworking and capable of farsightedness juxtaposed to being 'lazy', which worsens poverty, this chapter shows how most families are unable to accumulate wealth and are trapped in poverty, without much hope to overturn their conditions. The next chapters show how each of these social classes take part in different social relations of production that explain how social differentiation is reproduced over time.

## **5. Pastoralism and Livestock**



## Introduction

This chapter consists of an in-depth analysis of the current functioning of the livestock economy in the village of Lojom, in relation to its different social classes. Over the time-span of two generations, many families living in Lojom transitioned from transhumant agro-pastoralism to a sedentarized and more diversified economic production system.<sup>118</sup> While in the aftermath of the great famine of 1980 many Bokora families lost their livestock and migrated to Iriiri to live on farming, humanitarian aid and missionary work, other families acquired rifles and rebuilt their herds through armed raiding (see Chapter Three). Subsequently, cumulative raids, disease and government disarmament policies decimated the Bokora herds once again. As a result, today, few families in Lojom still hold livestock and undertake pastoral activities, with a current system that is different from the past in terms of grazing patterns, restocking strategies and, more broadly, the social/institutional use of animals.

This chapter investigates the reasons why some families are able to match traditional herd sizes, while others remain stockless. The in-depth analysis of the cluster of large herders and the group of stockless families provides important insights into the economic features of current pastoralism in Lojom. At the end of the chapter, it will be clear how livestock holding is 'a way in' to the local elite of Iriiri and Lojom, and one of the causes and drivers of socio-economic differentiation.

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<sup>118</sup> The major difference from the traditional livelihoods system illustrated in Chapter Three, is that while in the past the major source of wealth and food production came from the possession of livestock, presently, in Lojom sources of wealth and food production are much more diversified than before.

## 5.1 General Livestock Production

### 5.1.1 Cattle/human ratio in Karamoja

Traditionally,<sup>119</sup> livestock keeping in Karamoja was characterized as capital intensive in livestock, managed and organized over large areas of land, with access to good pasture and water throughout the different seasons (Quam, 1976). Over the years, particularly among the Bokora, the main means of production have changed from being capital intensive in livestock, scarce in labour power and extensive in grazing land, to being low in capital (livestock),<sup>120</sup> surplus in labour and reduced in grazing land, especially on good sites. While the historical processes responsible for these changes have been already analysed in Chapter Three, this chapter will investigate the current functioning of the livestock economy in Lojom that is a result of this transformation.

In terms of capital, possession of cattle is still among the most valuable assets in the region and it has value both in use and in exchange. Table 9 below shows the historical cycles of livestock ‘accumulation’ and ‘dispossession’ that have taken place in the region over the past 30 years, particularly the significant loss by some groups of the Karamojong, who experienced drastic cattle losses in the 1970s, which precipitated the livelihoods and famine crisis of 1980 (see Chapter Three). Subsequently, in the 1980s and 1990s, many Karamojong rebuilt their herds by acquiring arms and raiding outside the region. In fact, during that period of time, cattle population increased by an estimate of 692,000 head (Stites and Akabwai, 2009: 10), with growing episodes of intra-ethnic raiding, which made livestock ownership extremely fluid, without reducing the overall livestock population of the region (*ibid.*). On the contrary, between 2002 and 2014, there has been an estimated reduction in the total number of cattle in Karamoja from 1,465,074 to 568,000 head. Similar decreases were also registered for smaller stocks such as goats and sheep. Table 9 below shows the estimated cattle population in Karamoja over time.

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<sup>119</sup> Throughout the thesis, the term ‘tradition’ mainly refers to the early ethnographies in the 1950s and 1960s. See Chapter Two, methodology’s section.

<sup>120</sup> Across the region there are several studies (e.g., Ocan, 1994) confirming the estimates of a reduced number of livestock over the past decades.

**Table 9: Cattle population in Karamoja, 1959 to 2014<sup>121</sup>**

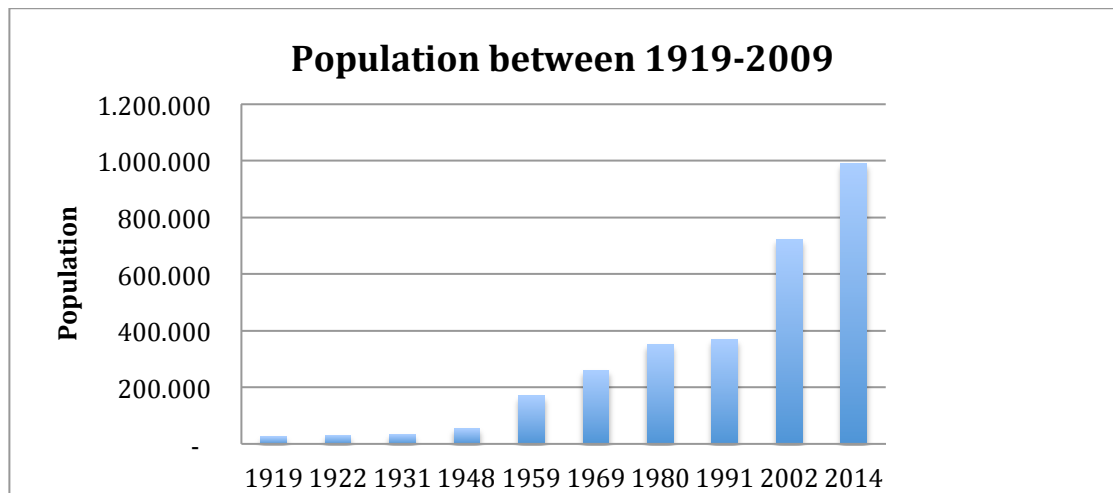
| Source   | Year | # Cattle                     |
|--|------|------------------------------|
| Novelli, 1999  | 1959 | 600,000                      |
| Novelli, 1999  | 1969 | 670,000                      |
| Novelli, 1999  | 1980 | 350,086                      |
| Catley, 1997 quoted in Novelli 1999  | 1995 | 595,000                      |
| UBOS Population Housing Census   | 2002 | 1,465,074<br>(35% less 2008) |
| MAAIF and UBOS Livestock Census  | 2008 | 2,253,960                    |
| DVO Livestock estimates quoted in Food Agriculture Organization (FAO) 2014 | 2014 | 568,000 <sup>122</sup>       |

However, it is important to highlight the difficulty to attain reliable data from livestock censuses. For instance, the livestock population census for 2008 was identified as implausible by the FAO due to both the excessively high stocking-rate density per acre of land in comparison to other similar ecological areas, and the almost unnatural herd growth rate of 35 per cent since the previous 2002 census (KALIP, 2009; FAO, 2014). Since there is no written source that directly criticizes findings from the livestock censuses of 2002 and 2014, I have decided to consider their data as plausible, given the other qualitative sources of information that fundamentally confirm a reduction in the cattle population in Karamoja over the same period of time.

Alongside the recent reduced capital in the form of cattle (between 2002 and 2014), over the same period of time there has also been demographic growth in the region, from approximately 700,000 people in 2002, to nearly one million in 2014 (see Figure 6).

<sup>121</sup> Cattle population estimates are hardly accurate for a number of reasons, such as; conflict (which has only recently improved) that made it difficult to access the region and collect data over a long period of time; the general unwillingness of the Karamojong to disclose the number of their animals, and the lack of knowledge by both aid agencies and the Ugandan state on how to undertake a livestock census in a pastoral setting. Other reasons that make cattle population estimates difficult are related to the concept of 'aid literacy' and explained in Chapter Nine.

<sup>122</sup> The data collected by UBOS during the 2014 census is not yet public.

**Figure 6: Human population in Karamoja in the period 1919-2014**

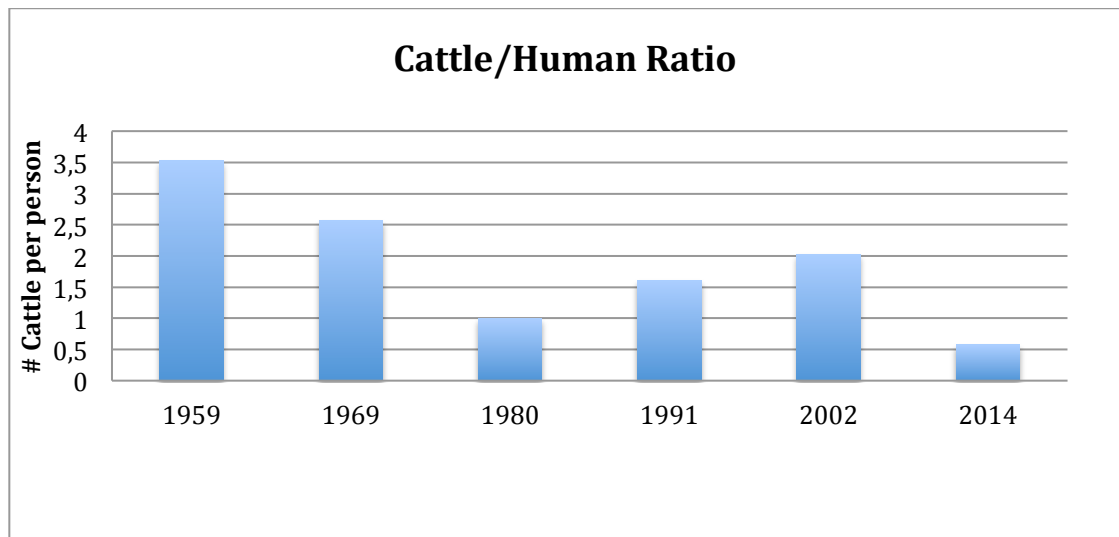
Source: UBOS 2014

The historical demographic growth is probably the consequence of several factors, such as the immigration of Sudanese refugees and of the Pokot from Kenya (Gartrell, 1988), increased medical care<sup>123</sup> provided in the region, vaccination campaigns, and the distribution of relief aid during times of drought and food shortages.<sup>124</sup> Presently, this population growth is mostly visible in towns also due to the 'de-pastoralisation' process that ultimately pushed many families to settle in more urban settings to earn a living (see Chapter Seven). Figure 7 shows the near halving of the cattle population between 1959 and 1980, and the doubling of the human population during the same period of time, which resulted in a reduced cattle/human ratio.

<sup>123</sup> For instance, already between 1923 and 1956, the number of people treated at the local hospital increased from 1,600 to 22,000 (Dyson-Hudson, 1962).

<sup>124</sup> Another interesting explanation that invites further research on the case of Karamoja is suggested in a synthesis paper written in April 2009 by the Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG), according to which: '[...] in the continuum from nomadism to semi-nomadism to sedentarism, birth rates rise and death rates fall at each stage' and also '[u]rbanisation influences population growth among pastoralists, especially in arid and semi-arid areas' (HPG, 2009: 3).

**Figure 7: Cattle population versus human population in Karamoja<sup>125</sup>**



Source: Novelli, 1999; FAO, 2014; UBOS, 2014

However, these aggregated figures do not indicate data for each Karamojong group. Following the 1963 FAO census, for instance

[...] the district average was 3.5 cattle per person, but counties inhabited by Jie, Dodo[th] and Pokot had higher averages, while the three predominantly Karimojong [sections] had a lower number of cattle per person. (Gartrell, 1988: 208)

In the years between 1980 and 2002,<sup>126</sup> despite the significantly growing human population, the cattle/human ratio increased, whereas after 2002 it dramatically decreased, reaching, in 2014, the lowest ratio in the past half century. Similarly, over the last thirty years, other pastoralists in East Africa have experienced the same pattern as an increasing human population is combined with a livestock population that is either steady or in decline (McCabe *et al.*, 2010: 322).

Apart from the decreased cattle/human ratio – mainly due to population increase – this data also confirms a general narrative of many families from the Bokora section (including those in Iriiri and Lojom) involving the loss of animals over the past decade. As already explained in Chapter Three, for the Bokora section and the people of Lojom, the loss of animals was due to the fact that they were among the first segments of the Karamojong to be disarmed and the first to be dispossessed of their

<sup>125</sup> However, it must be emphasised that both human and cattle population figures in Karamoja are only approximations.

<sup>126</sup> While the human population census refers to 1991, the cattle data refers to 1995; therefore, given the stable demographic growth, the difference between the 1980 and 1991 cattle/human ratios may actually be less significant.

livestock due to armed raiding. In terms of the entire region, the reduction of cattle population between 2002 and 2014, is explained by the international armed raiding conducted by the Turkana and Kenyan Pokot, who exploited the disarmed Karamojong herders and drove out some of their livestock. An additional contributing factor, as explained by Mkutu (2008) and Eaton (2010), is the increasing commercialization of raiding that resulted in the loss of cattle from the region, as raided cattle were quickly sold to traders from outside, a situation that escalated during the disarmament period.

While all these factors have contributed to the reduction of livestock population in Karamoja, the primary structural factor involved was the policy of the protected kraal system (enclosure of animals) that was developed in 2006, as part of the Karamoja Integrated Development and Disarmament Programme. Many protected kraals were put in place across the region, most of which operated between 2006 and 2011 (see Appendix V for Iriiri). This policy consisted in forcing herders to leave their livestock for most of the day in enclosures guarded by UPDF barracks, in order to discourage raids and protect the livestock. An additional aim of this policy was to collect quantitative information on the livestock, and enhance the capacities to identify both raiders and stolen animals, both through surveillance and search of the livestock that was kept in the kraals. As suggested by Mkutu (2010), ‘the assumption was that if all livestock were kept in protected kraals, the stolen animals would be easily identified and recovered’ (2010: 97). On one hand, this policy provided some protection (Human Rights Watch, 2007) but on the other hand it decimated the livestock population in Karamoja (FAO, 2014). This was due to several reasons, firstly, the high concentration of livestock in one small area caused the spread of animal diseases; secondly, it further reduced the mobility of the animals, causing inefficient and reduced consumption of both pasture and water within the available grazing land (while also causing the phenomenon of local overgrazing), which ultimately reduced the welfare of the animals, as well as the rate of the natural herd growth (Human Rights Watch, 2007; Stites and Akabwai, 2009; Knighton, 2010; FAO, 2014); lastly, the protected kraals in Karamoja were sites with the most concentrated wealth in cattle in the entire region and were therefore often attacked by cattle raiders (Mkutu, 2010). Given the limited economic resources allocated by the government for the protection of the kraals, for instance in terms of UPDF personnel, it was not uncommon that

animals in these kraals were wiped out, thus leaving their owners stockless.<sup>127</sup> Also, as is usually common in Karamoja, after a raid (see Chapter Three), whenever the animals were recovered by the soldiers/UPDF, they were often not returned to their original owners.<sup>128</sup>

### 5.1.2 Livestock in Lojom

The village of Lojom is an example of the recent history of 'livestock dispossession',<sup>129</sup> with only a minority of families living in the village still owning cattle, whereas two generations ago almost every descendant owned cattle. In particular in Lojom, 66 per cent of families do not even own an ox and, among herders, the majority only own a few head of cattle (see Chapter Four). Despite the rapid 'livestock dispossession' experienced by the people of Lojom, with the most recent one resulting from raiding conducted by the Jie and the Pian sections and conflict with the national army (see Chapter Three), some families have been able to keep and/or rebuild a relatively large herd, thus resisting the process of 'de-pastoralisation'. In particular, of 33 cattle owners, five of them are able to match traditional herd sizes, whereas the other 28 could be defined as 'marginal herders'.<sup>130</sup> Specifically, these five families have control and power over 61 per cent of all the cattle in Lojom, averaging 27.4 head of cattle per family. In terms of class dynamics, three of these families belong to the class of the 'better off', one family is in the 'middle', and one family is in the 'poor' class. Interestingly, three of the five larger herders form a cluster of livestock owners who share the same seasonal grazing movements, herding labour, and keep their animals together in one kraal. This cluster is also called a herd unit (traditionally *espan*), labelled with the name of its largest owner, and, within the kraal, each herd unit is separated by fences.

Animals from Lojom, for instance, are divided into different herd units such as 'those of Adupinkal' and those of 'Lonyangaluk'. Within these herd units, there are

<sup>127</sup> Interview with regional leader number #4 (see Appendix I).

<sup>128</sup> Interview with local leader number #2 (see Appendix I).

<sup>129</sup> Similarly, Matt Kandel in his PhD thesis (2014) about Teso writes about the process of 'land dispossession' in Teso and its outcomes.

<sup>130</sup> Borrowed from the analytical category of 'marginal farmers' developed by Henry Bernstein (2010), here this thesis introduces the term 'marginal herders' by which is meant that these families are below the viable number of cattle necessary for survival.

multiple owners who are often affines and relatives. Therefore, in pastoral management, the level of affinity cuts across different social classes; for instance, the largest herd unit from Lojom is formed by Adupinkal (better off), his cousin Lokwaakou (better off), his brother Ewapet (better off), his son Lomerikaalei (middle), and his nephew Loethekide (poor). They keep all their cattle together and their herd unit is called Adupinkal's cattle. Furthermore, within this herd unit, the level of wealth is highly correlated with age, with the male heads of families in the better off class, and the following generation in the middle and poor classes (e.g. Loethekide). Control and power over cattle in Lojom is thus concentrated among a restricted group of relatives, which is a factor that shapes social relations in the village.

### **5.1.3 New transhumance patterns**

In Karamoja, livestock seasonal grazing movements have always been an essential factor in the overall livestock production. Over time, this key factor of production has undergone several changes, from the customarily free movement over large grazing areas, which was curtailed by colonial policies (see Chapter Three) and even more so by the NRM regime through the disarmament programme, until the current hybrid situation was reached. While the transformation of the modes of production that happened in Karamoja has already been analysed in Chapter Three, this section will examine the present seasonal grazing movements of the animals owned by the residents of Lojom.

The protected kraal system was introduced for the first time in Iriiri in 2005/2006, as part of the disarmament programme (see Appendix V). From that moment, all the animals in the sub-county were gathered into one big kraal at the entrance of the trading centre, which was protected by UPDF soldiers. Animal movements were in the hands of the soldiers, resulting in animals grazing near the kraal with almost no access from their owners. With the conclusion of the protected kraal system towards the end of 2011, after most of the region had been disarmed, animals were re-organized into small kraals spread all over the Iriiri sub-county territory, and they were guarded by ex-raiders called Local Defence Units (LDUs) (see



both Chapters Three and Nine).<sup>131</sup> Since then, every year, animals from Lojom have been seasonally moved between four and five relatively fixed locations, thus keeping elements of traditional transhumance pastoralism, but operating within a much smaller rangeland.

Currently, herds in Lojom are maintained through daily grazing patterns near the kraal. During the dry season, usually between December and March, depending on the available grass and water, the location of the kraal changes within a limited range of locations.<sup>132</sup> Kraals can be located as far as half a walking day's distance from the livestock owners' residence, resulting in cattle owners being able to access their animals whenever they want.<sup>133</sup> Priority is given to the use of animals for agricultural activities and, every year around March, the animals stay next to the homesteads for one or two months to be used for ploughing the owners' gardens.

Overall, the decision of each kraal's location is taken in agreement between the LDUs, the Local Council 3 (LC3)<sup>134</sup> and the livestock owners, after consideration of several factors, such as level of security, availability of grass and water, and potential for animal intrusion on agricultural activities. For instance, an area near many gardens is usually not selected as a location for a kraal. In Lojom, the largest livestock owner is Adupinkal, who is also the LC3 of Iriiri sub-county, and his son, Lomerikaalei, also a resident of Lojom, who is the head of the LDUs, and most of the decisions related to cattle movements are made by them.

Despite the fact that the policy of the protected kraal system ended in 2011 (see Chapter Three), animals are still only moving within the district of Napak. Animals movements across districts and regions require a special permit issued by the Local Council 5<sup>135</sup> and police. Regardless of the difficulty in obtaining these permits, Bokora herders from central Karamoja have not currently returned to the pre-protected kraal system seasonal grazing patterns.<sup>136</sup> In fact, herders from Kangole and Mathany sub-counties (Napak district) no longer graze their animals during the dry season in the

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<sup>131</sup> In 2014, in the area of Iriiri, the following kraals were present: Lokupooi, Apeipuke, Agwe, Lomuriangalepan, Nabwal and Angikothowa.

<sup>132</sup> See Appendix V.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Political appointment elected by the people in charge of the sub-county.

<sup>135</sup> Political appointment elected by the people in charge of the District.

<sup>136</sup> This finding is in contrast to what was found by the FAO in 2014.

area of Mount Napak.<sup>137</sup> This can be explained either by the impossibility of movement across administrative boundaries or by the evidence that livestock numbers have dropped markedly. Many reports show and local livestock owners confirm this, to the extent that, within these grazing patterns, the available pasture and water is enough to satisfy the demands of the existing animal population. In both cases, this finding contradicts a study conducted by the FAO (2014), according to which:

following improved security conditions, pastoralists have returned to the pre-protected kraal system seasonal grazing patterns, being free to carry-out traditional management practices inherent to the right to roam, with consequent better access to pasture and water. (FAO, 2014: 5)

#### **5.1.4 A day in Lokupooi kraal<sup>138</sup>**

In September 2013 cattle were moved from the Nakicumet kraal to the Lokupooi kraal.<sup>139</sup> According to the UPDF, their decision for the kraal's location was based upon considering the availability of grass and water, the level of security, and the distance from gardens. On the contrary, according to the elders frequenting the kraal, such as Tebakol and Angolere, the reasons were simply made up, and the final decision was probably taken together.

Within Lokupooi kraal there were two sections, each one guarded by six LDUs.<sup>140</sup> According to the elders, the kraal would have been kept in this location until the animals had had enough water to drink. In 2012, for example, due to different weather conditions, the kraal was positioned near the village of Lojom, behind the hill (Lomorunyangai), some five kilometres away from its current location.

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<sup>137</sup> See Chapter Three for traditional dry season grazing patterns.

<sup>138</sup> This particular kraal was visited the 19, 25 and 26 November 2013.

<sup>139</sup> See Appendix V.

<sup>140</sup> As will be shown in Chapter Nine, LDUs are deployed among former raiders to take care of the animals. They are paid by the government, supervised by the UPDF and they are armed with AK-47 rifles.

**Photo 1: Lokupooi kraal**

Source: Author's photo, 2014

One of the former warriors (Keem) had his animals in this kraal. As is customary, Keem has reported that he does not know the number of animals he possesses but only their colours. He has also discussed that it is his son who is taking care of his animals together with his brother-in-law, while he rarely goes to the kraal.

According to the elders, Lokupooi kraal is a type of kraal named *ateker*, that is formed by people of the same clan section. People taking care of the animals are relatives of the livestock owners and few of them are owners themselves. For instance, relatives of the three most important livestock owners in the area, Ekorimug, Lochubakale and Adupinkal, are at the Lokupooi kraal. Other types of kraal named *ngitella* (or *ekitela*) are based instead on the territorial section.

Apanyekodocho is the kraal leader at Lokupooi and also keeps his cattle in the southern section of the kraal. He used to be a well-known raider, and now owns many of the cattle in the kraal. Interestingly, over the years he has also developed a profound interest in agricultural activities, and he divides his time between cultivating different gardens and checking the kraal every day.

During one of my morning visits to the kraal, two important things occurred; one bull was transported to a village to mount some cows and some women came

from a village to exchange maize flour for milk. In the kraal, *posho* is mixed with milk. As per tradition, every morning people in the kraal drink milk mixed with blood (*echarakan*), and *ghee* (local cheese) mixed with milk (*elabo*). Young children milk the cows, while elders sit and wait for the drink. The youngest shake a drum to make the *ghee*. The critical cut for the bloodletting is the responsibility of the men, while breeding decisions are taken by the elders. Only the births of animals are assisted by young men, and depending on their age, young children upgrade from being in charge of goats and sheep to being in charge of cattle. During my visits to the kraal, the same two elders, Tebakol and Angolere from Naloret village, were at the centre of the kraal, since, as cattle supervisors, they check the work of the young shepherds and the movements of the cattle.

Most people frequenting the kraal were men of different ages, but mainly old and young males, except for two young girls, daughters of Nayomodomo, a large herder in the area of Iriiri, who came in the morning to make the *ghee* and take it home. In the afternoon, people in the kraal were eating *ghee* and drinking milk mixed with *kweete*. Small huts were available for sleep in case of rain, and small bonfires burned. Because the grass was still too high and the smaller stock might get lost, most of the cattle present were bulls, heifers and calves, along with a few goats and sheep. Despite of the security, at night, there were many bonfires and at each there was an AK-47 to protect people and animals in case of raids. The owners of the rifles were the LDUs (see photo 2 below), apparently eleven in total, for the entire kraal. Since they are ex-warriors, they live together in a friendly way with the herders, sharing 'beds' and food. During one of my visits, towards the end of the night, large livestock owners such as Merinyang and Lochubakale joined the people at the kraal for leisure activities.

**Photo 2: LDUs in Lokupooi kraal**



Source: Author's photo, 2014

Following the end of the protected kraal policy, in the larger area of Iriiri, a new system for both herding and protecting the livestock emerged, in which selected ex-raiders guarded their own animals and those of their relatives. Presently, only a privileged bunch of families still have contact and relationships with a place like the Lokupooi kraal. In the next section, I will show how few families, in both in Iriiri and Lojom, despite the process of 'de-pastoralisation', have actually been able to maintain livestock, and therefore kraals, at centre of their lives.

## **5.2 Wealth/Capital Accumulation and Restocking Strategies**

So far, this chapter has illustrated how only a minority of families in Lojom are involved with livestock keeping, and how both human and animal seasonal grazing movements have greatly decreased. These changes have resulted in the disappearance of transhumant pastoralism as an important strategy for production, accumulation and social reproduction. Another fundamental transformation that has occurred in the livestock economy is related to the strategies available for accumulating wealth in cattle and for restocking a herd after a loss. These changes also explain the reasons for the high numbers of permanently stockless families in Lojom.

Traditionally, in Karamoja, even when possessing a large herd, increasing a herd has always been a difficult task, with several different options for restocking, such as the traditional practices of borrowing, skilful herd management, and raiding (see Chapter Three). Currently, those with many animals are still able to increase their herds, while those who are stockless are outside the livestock economy and cannot restock unless they have initial capital. In particular, the stockless families in Lojom are unable to go back into livestock production because of the limited opportunities for herd restocking that mainly resulted from the end of raiding through the 'imposed peace', the lower payment of bridewealth, and the decreased prospects for herding labour.

### **5.2.1 Cattle raiding**

Chapter Three illustrated how the first Bokora settlers in the area of Iriiri had access to a vast quantity of free land and survived through a combination of farming and other economic activities, up until the moment in which they armed themselves, in the mid-1980s, and rebuilt their herds mostly through armed raiding. This chapter illustrates how few families have been able to keep their wealth over time and are currently unable to match traditional herd sizes, with the majority of families having remained stockless. This issue concerns the status of ex-raiders in the present economy.

In Lojom, the wealthiest and most influential individuals are also former raiders or prominent 'war-leader[s] with high reputation and status' (Gulliver, 1955: 114); this fact underlines the historical importance of access to rifles, which played a crucial role

both in the accumulation and reproduction of wealth in cattle and in the current socio-economic stratification of Iriiri and Lojom. Indeed, the Big Men in the village are Adupinkal, also named the ‘father of the warriors’, and Lonyangaluk, both of whom are heads of extended families belonging to the class of the better off, and also once well-known raiders. Moreover, Adupinkal’s children were all famous raiders in the area of Iriiri and also among the Bokora, all equipped with AK-47 rifles. For both Adupinkal and Lonyangaluk, access to rifles and control over people played a crucial role in the ‘primitive accumulation’ and reproduction of wealth in cattle over time. For instance, while most of the people living in Lojom lost their animals over the past fifteen years, Adupinkal never lost all his cattle over this period.<sup>141</sup> This family team, or elite of raiders, comprised of fathers and sons, is typical in the area of Iriiri. All of Lochubakale’s<sup>142</sup> sons – another well known ex-raider from the village of Napeilet, near Lojom, who wears an ivory bangle as a sign of his wealth – were also cattle raiders. In particular, one of his sons, Keem, accumulated much wealth in cattle before being arrested by the UPDF. After he was released from Moroto prison, he invested some of his capital to run two small businesses in town (see Chapter Seven).

Overall, from the census survey I conducted, it is clear that in Lojom, at that time, most of respondents (70%) indicated raiding as the major cause for the loss of animals after animal disease. In particular, many stockless men reported the impossibility of restocking because of having been disarmed by the government over the years, which has made them unable to raid and rebuild their herds. This finding supports the argument that access to rifles was a powerful means for both protecting, reproducing and accumulating capital in cattle. In present day Iriiri and Lojom, if an ex-warrior is not in prison and manages to stay alive, being a successful raider plays an important role in being amongst the wealthiest livestock owners. These wealth pathways explain how wealth was accumulated by successful raiders, when rifles were accessible and the presence of the UPDF in the region was still minimal.

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<sup>141</sup> Interview of case study number #1 (see Appendix I).

<sup>142</sup> Interview of case study number #7 (see Appendix I).

Since 2010, Karamoja has been a relatively peaceful region with only sporadic episodes of raiding and road ambushes.<sup>143</sup> While the 'success' of the disarmament exercise ended raiding and road ambushes (see Chapter Three) and improved human welfare in the region, at the same time, among herders, it has blocked the vertical movements of wealth in cattle. While disarmament ended raiding activities, which were both threats to large livestock owners as well as means for social reproduction and methods of restocking for poor or ex-herders (see Chapter Three), the reduced degree of vertical social mobility has also reproduced a social differentiation based on livestock holdings in a much more permanent way. At the same time, with the present level of security, livestock owners no longer lose their herds due to raiding and the major threats to livestock are mostly related to animal diseases and droughts. In Lojom, for instance, one of the major issues recently faced by herders was the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease, which resulted in the government closing all the livestock markets in Karamoja in May 2014, and declaring a quarantine up until early 2015.

Generally speaking, in Karamoja, livestock ownership is now more secure and stable than before. Nevertheless, the current unequal distribution of livestock ownership, whereby five families own 61 per cent of all the cattle in Lojom, can hardly be reversed. Several other studies show that a growing number of the Karamojong people are becoming cattle-less (Ocan, 1994; Gray, 2000; Walker, 2002; Stites *et al.*, 2007). For instance, according to Ocan: 'Among Karimojong pastoralists the number of people having large herds is shrinking, while those with no animals at all are on the increase' (Ocan, 1994: 131).

### 5.2.2 Bridewealth payments

Traditionally, in Karamoja, one of the major means to create bonds with other families was the payment of bridewealth, and the higher the payment the groom made to the bride's family, the more extended the family network that was formed (see Chapter Three). Smaller bridewealth payments meant smaller family networks and less possibility for eventual restocking after a loss, for organizing a successful raiding, or for

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<sup>143</sup> One relevant episode, at least for the development workers, was the car ambushes that occurred in March 2010 between Nakapiripirit and Moroto road of the ICRC vehicle where all the people were killed besides one international aid worker that was wearing a bullet proof jacket.



simply achieving profitable exchanges of livestock (ibid.). As a result, being able to pay for bridewealth was important for any herdsman, both to extend his social network and to restock or accumulate wealth in cattle (ibid.), thus also increasing his opportunities to survive.<sup>144</sup>

Since 2001, nobody in Lojom has paid a significant bridewealth payment at a level similar to what was formerly paid, and overall, only 25 per cent of families were formed through the payment of bridewealth. In the past, a minimum number of animals within the family's herd was indispensable to marry, '[...] a man can afford to marry if his own house has at least twenty cattle over and above minimum requirements for economic purposes' (Gulliver, 1955: 89). Currently in Lojom and also elsewhere in the region, despite the loss of animals, men still cohabit with women and have children, regardless of the payment of bridewealth.

The fact that only one fourth of husbands in Lojom have paid bridewealth is a scenario that would not be possible in the past. It signifies both loss of animals for many in Lojom and other places, since marriages are often among people from different villages and Karimojong sections, and the possibility of creating a family almost without the exchange of animals. Table 10 below shows the decrease in bridewealth payments per wife since the 1980s in Lojom.

**Table 10: Average bridewealth paid from 1960 to 2000**

| Years | # of cattle | # of wives | Average number of cattle paid for each bride |
|-------|-------------|------------|--|
| 1960  | 90          | 2          | 45   |
| 1970  | 80          | 2          | 40   |
| 1980  | 587         | 13         | 45   |
| 1990  | 316         | 9          | 35   |
| 2000  | 35          | 5          | 7  |

Source: Author's census survey

While most of the people living in Lojom in the 1980s lost their animals, on average, they were still paying the highest number of animals for each bride. This finding is in line with what was previously illustrated by Mkutu (2008), according to whom:

One would have expected that with diminishing cattle and livestock rearing as a livelihood, the bride price would be going down. However this is not the case in Karamoja, where it remains as high as it has been in previous decades. (Mkutu, 2008: 243)

<sup>144</sup> For the details on traditional bridewealth payments see Chapter Three.

The bridewealth system was also the second important way to restock among the Karamojong. As a consequence of lower bridewealth, in recent years in Lojom, the possibility to accumulate livestock through receiving payment of bridewealth has significantly declined. In the past, mothers used to get a share of their daughters' bridewealth (Gulliver, 1955), a benefit which they no longer enjoy. As a result of the reduction of animals, new rights and access to the remaining capital have been established, with male family members controlling the little that is still exchanged during bridewealth payments.

For the most part, presently, in Lojom, grooms only pay for *ekicul*<sup>145</sup> (the first born) in order to 'acquire the children', and then children are socially recognized as belonging to the husband's family. For instance, the usual payment is eleven goats (or sheep) to the wife's family and on top of the eleven goats or sheep, one fat ram (*lomutu*) has to be given to the mother-in-law as well, as a sign of 'appreciation'. Traditionally, the number of animals transferred during *ekicul* was different, but the social meaning of this ceremony has remained the same:

When a child is born of this union, the family of the husband will contribute [*ekicul*] to the family of the wife, namely a cow with its calf, or three oxen, or thirty goats. And these will be counted towards the head of cattle which will have to be transferred for the second stage of marriage. In cases where the union breaks up, these will be returned to the husband's family. (Novelli, 1999: 235)

Presently, the cost of *ekicul* is highly affected by the groom's social class, and negotiation is conducted between the bride and the groom's parents. In addition to the eleven goats, a wealthy family will often also pay with one bull and one heifer.<sup>146</sup> Over the years, the spread of formal education in the region (see Chapter Eight) has introduced new marriage transactions that have partly replaced the traditional bridewealth system. Depending on the bride's level of schooling, the groom has to repay the total amount of school fees which were paid to educate her to her parents, a system that is particularly common among the Pian section of the Karimojong (South Karamoja).<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> The payment of *ekicul* is already covered when one pays the full bridewealth.

<sup>146</sup> This is true in Iriiri. In Moroto, for instance, the payment of *ekicul* is higher, i.e., one bull, one heifer and twelve goats.

<sup>147</sup> This is mostly the case if the young woman becomes pregnant when she is still in school.

The process of 'de-pastoralisation' that includes the loss of livestock for many families and fewer restocking opportunities available compared to the past, inevitably reduced the frequency of traditional marriages arrangements, and changed the ways in which alliances were traditionally formed across families and communities. However, the reasons for the decrease in traditional marriages are more complex and go beyond the scarcity of animal ownership. For instance, the propagation of the Catholic and Anglican religions plays an important role. Presently in Iriiri and Lojom, couples' living arrangements vary from unofficial marriage, to official marriage under religious arrangements, to traditional marriage, to a combination of both. It appears that the unofficially married are on the rise, especially men who have children with multiple women without any formal social recognition. This is important in terms of defining a family and understanding what the economic and social relations within these types of emerging 'families' are like.

Traditionally, bridewealth was a sort of 'insurance' for the fulfilment of marriage. Without the payment, any man who offered bridewealth could marry a woman even if she was living with and raising children with another man. In the case of adultery, a husband might request that the bridewealth be returned to him. Presently, without bridewealth payments, there are no 'social protection mechanisms'. According to tradition a man who wants to marry a woman who is already cohabiting with another man can make a dowry offer to her family-head and take her as his spouse. However, women are now to some extent freer to choose their partners, regardless of their family's opinion and bridewealth offers. Despite these changes, I found that most women still value bridewealth as the preferred and most honourable marital practice, regardless of their class affiliation and/or level of formal education. Big Men in Lojom exploit the symbolic value of bridewealth as a way to expand their network and influence and increase their access to family labour power, in a virtuous cycle of family development, further accumulation of wealth in cattle, and individual profits in the cash economy. The process of 'de-pastoralisation' has thus resulted in low bridewealth payments which, in turn, reduced the number of kinship relationships, which were fundamental for stockless families to go back into livestock production.

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This is another factor that has strongly penalised stockless families, and helps explain why so many families in Lojom have been stockless for over a decade, thus reproducing the ‘de-pastoralisation’ process over time. In addition, women’s reduced rights over their share of the bridewealth have also had an indirect impact on social relations within families (see Chapter Ten).

### **5.2.3 Herding labour**

The last element traditionally used for herd restocking was based on herding opportunities supplied by rich livestock owners to poor ones (see Chapter Three). Given the new situation, with a surplus of labour and a scarcity of capital in livestock, herding associations have lost their productive role. In fact, in Lojom there is almost no need to hire external herding labourers outside affine/kinship connections.

As described in Chapter Three, there have always been rich and poor herders in Karamoja, but, among families of different wealth levels, there have also always been exchanges of capital and labour, which were indispensable for exploiting the means of production more efficiently. In Lojom, the few large livestock owners are mainly formed by affines, and, due to the low exchange of capital and labour, which were once key elements used to bond between families of poor and wealthy herders, possibilities for restocking from non-related stockless families are now minimal. By looking at the large livestock owners in the area of Iriiri, it is clear that a cluster of affines exists, which results in high access barriers for others regarding any form of exchange of animals such as borrowing, herding labour and so on.

Concerning the social division of labour in Lojom, cattle owners and shepherds are often different people, occupying two different roles based on age and level of affinity. Currently in Lojom, cattle owners rely only on shepherds for grazing their animals, who are usually close young male relatives who spend most of their time at the kraal and do it ‘because they enjoy the milk’.<sup>148</sup> For instance, Adupinkal and Lokwaakou live in Iriiri town, and their herd is managed either by their poorer or younger relatives, under the supervision of Lomerikaalei, who is the head of the LDU of Iriiri sub-county.

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<sup>148</sup> Interview with group discussion number #2.

Given that the overall number of animals is relatively small, the number of herders necessary for herding animals is minimal. The reduced size of the herds as well as the smaller areas of rangeland have thus resulted in less need for herding labour, which used to be one of the options available for stockless pastoralists to restock their herd.

#### 5.2.4 Market and animal exchanges

As a result of all these changes, there are few opportunities for poor or ex-herders living in Lojom to restock their herds. The next section will explain how restocking strategies are currently implemented by local herders, and the key role of the animal market as a place for restocking, as well as a place for making a living in times of need.

The few strategies available for herd restocking are similar to the past and are mainly based on a combination of animal exchanges and skilful breeding manipulation. In Lojom, local herders increase their stock through formal exchange of animals among herd-owners to accumulate more livestock. These exchanges are conducted mostly at the weekly animal markets, inside and outside the Karamoja region, with the aim of increasing the stock through natural development. Herders, for instance, may sell one small ox for ten goats or one big ox for two small heifers.

- 1) One small ox → 10 goats → More goats by reproduction → Exchange for more oxen
- 2) One big ox → Two small heifers → More oxen by reproduction

These animal exchanges are common all over the region and it is interesting how, over the past forty years, the types of exchanges and the rates between animals have not changed.<sup>149</sup> Depending on the most advantageous exchange opportunities, livestock owners access different animal markets. Every Friday, for example, Keem<sup>150</sup> goes to *Ocor-imongin* animal market in Katakwi district, in the Teso region, to exchange his animals, depending on what species and breeds are needed to further increase his

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<sup>149</sup> Professor D.W. Quam, during his fieldwork in Karamoja for his PhD in 1970, shows the same type of restocking strategies and exchange rate between animals.

<sup>150</sup> Interview of case study number #6 (see Appendix I).

herd size. Kotido District has one of the major animal markets in Karamoja and in 2013, for example, Keem used to exchange one donkey for ten goats. These strategies help many herders in Iriiri and Lojom increase their herd sizes. Overall, these opportunities are seasonal and livestock owners are fully aware of what each market offers in the region, as well as in the neighbouring regions.

As described in Chapter Three, traditionally, stockless pastoralists were 'infrequent and impermanent' because they were either able to restock or they died. On the contrary, in Lojom today, stockless pastoralists are the majority of the population, and most of them have been without livestock for over a decade. With the end of raiding, the decrease in the number of livestock owners, the reduction in bridewealth payments and the fewer opportunities for herding labour, stockless families do not have many other ways for restocking and getting back into the livestock economy, apart from going to the animal market and buying the animals. This finding is supported by most informants in the census survey, who claimed they did not restock once they had lost their animals due to lack of cash. This is interesting because it shows how, currently, the most accessible way to restock is going to the weekly animal market and buying animals, whereas the alternative (and more traditional) options for restocking seem to only be available to the few large livestock owners or the local elite.

There is an animal market in Iriiri trading centre every Wednesday and different people are associated with the market, including small and big traders, poor and rich livestock owners. Trading animals through the exploitation of the windfall prices at the market is another way to accumulate more animals. Ekorimug,<sup>151</sup> for instance, a large herder in the area, goes to the Iriiri animal market to buy or exchange animals to increase the size of his herd. Depending on the prices at the market, he may buy when prices are low and sell when prices are high. However, besides trading, Ekorimug rarely sells his animals without also buying, unless he is in need of cash.<sup>152</sup>

There are also small traders at the market who sell and buy at different animal markets once a week; they earn a profit which lasts them until the next animal market day. For instance, there are small traders from Iriiri who go to bigger animal markets in

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<sup>151</sup> Interview of case study number #5 (see Appendix I).

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

central Karamoja such as Kangole and Mathany, buy animals there and then sell them at the Iriiri market.

Overall, due to the relatively low number of animals in the area, at the Iriiri market there are almost more traders than livestock owners. During the lean season, there are more livestock owners who go to the animal market to sell their livestock to purchase food. Lately, a new phenomenon is the increased number of large traders from South Sudan who visit the major livestock markets in Karamoja and buy animals. According to various traders, the presence of these large traders from Juba is both increasing the animal prices overall, and causing the decline of stocks across the region. According to the FAO (2014):

There is significant demand for local animals by Ugandan traders from other districts as well as from South Sudan and Kenya. Local herders are interested in purchasing heifers, often imported from outside the region, suggesting that local herds are recovering after their decimation during the protected kraal years. (FAO, 2014: 5)

This chapter suggests that this process of animal restocking is not only occurring among poor herders but also among large livestock owners, who are further accumulating wealth in cattle, thus polarizing the level of ownership even more. Restocking has always been a difficult enterprise for any Karamojong herder at any given time; however, in Lojom the available strategies for restocking are essentially based on initial capital either in the form of cash or animals, without which the accumulation process cannot even begin. Unsurprisingly, with the available strategies for restocking, there are as many as 66 families in Lojom that have been stockless for over a decade.

### 5.3 Livestock holdings as a factor of social differentiation

Following the ‘livestock dispossession’ experienced by the Bokora and in particular by the people of Lojom – resulting in many families seeking a variety of different means for social reproduction – for most of the men, due to intrinsic ‘material’ and ‘symbolic profits’ (cf. Bourdieu, 1986), accumulating wealth in cattle is still one of the major goals in life. As explained in Bourdieu’s concept of ‘material’ and ‘symbolic profits’, similarly, the possession of cattle in Karamoja still results in

[...] full benefit from the multiplier effect implied in concentration and to secure the profits of membership – material profits, such as all the types of services accruing from useful relationships, and symbolic profits, such as those derived from the association with a rare, prestigious group. (Bourdieu, 1986: 89)

What is meant here by ‘material profits’ are the material resources that are derived from the possession of animals, such as the possibility of extending the family by marrying another wife, and enhancing herd size through animal exchanges; this also encompasses more access to animal products in the form of blood and milk, and more acres to cultivate with the ox-drawn plough (see Chapter Six). Symbolic goals –, as they the people in Lojom simply put it, ‘owning cattle is culturally still important for us’ – entail the possibility to conduct important ceremonies (*asapan* and *akiriket*), to be part of the wealthier class, and to generally acquire power and influence over the ‘extended family’ and the village.

The material and symbolic categorizations are surely not dichotomies, since the acquisition of ‘symbolic profits’ through the possession of animals also influences and increases access and rights over economic resources, and *vice versa*. This phenomenon is explicated through the use of animals as bridewealth to create extended/polygynous families, which aim at gaining a position of leadership in the family and in the village, and ultimately enable male heads of families to acquire rights over family labour (see Chapter Six), and, depending on which wife is married, to have a more or less extended social network (see Chapter Ten). The symbolic and material or economic profits are interwoven because being able to pay substantial bridewealth in Lojom provides both the husband and the wife with social legitimization, status and the respect of their peers.



As will be analysed in Chapter Six, the control and exploitation<sup>153</sup> of a family's labour are fundamental elements for the reproduction of social differentiation among classes and within families. However, to gain control over more units of family labour power, the first step is to create as extended a family as possible. In Lojom, despite the lower cost of bridewealth, possession of animals is still a required, indispensable mean for the formation of extended families, *conditio sine qua non* for the exploitation of family and women's labour in particular. As per tradition, the bigger the herd, the more wives a man can eventually have/marry, the larger the extended families is made possible.

Overall, by comparing the social classes identified by the people of Lojom and the data from the census survey, there is a strong correlation between number of animals owned by a family and other factors, such as number of wives a man has and percentages of initiated heads of families (*asapan*). These factors are highly correlated with one another, and their varying amounts and combinations determine diverse outcomes.

Particular features of Karimojong culture, such as *akiriket* and *asapan*, are indispensable for the legitimization of traditional power, and they are ceremonies that cannot be executed without the possession of animals (see Chapter Three). In this way, livestock ownership works both as a means for attaining extended families and a means to acquire a position of power within the village. Therefore, leadership is achieved not only by being the head of many wives and family members living in the village and elsewhere, but by also using the possession of animals to pay for traditional ceremonies, such as the *akiriket* and the *asapan*. This accumulation of wealth in cattle still provides, under different forms, a high social rate of return.

As explained in Chapter Three, the *akiriket* and the *asapan* are two fundamental moments where power is exercised, as per tradition. The title of *asapan* is the expression of the institutionalized leadership *par excellence*, which guarantees a particular form of long-lasting social relationship (gerontocracy). Those initiated exercise authority in the name of the whole village through representation. Adupinkal,

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<sup>153</sup> All through the thesis by 'exploitation' is meant: 'The capacity to appropriate surplus labour – labour beyond what producers expend on their own reproduction – signals social relations of exploitation (Bernstein, 2010: 21).

for instance, was identified as the richest person in Lojom, and he is also the head of the village, he is initiated, and is the LC3 of Iriiri sub-county (see Chapter Ten). As previously explained, his past as a famous raider has allowed him and his family to accumulate large herds, to the extent that he was elected as an LC3 for the first time in 1996.<sup>154</sup> His case shows how the formal political power as an LC was acquired through traditional recognition as a large herder and a leader in battle. Adupinkal has thus obtained double recognition, both from traditional and formal power. As a result, he is considered the most powerful man in Lojom and in the area of Iriiri, or, in the local language, referred to as *ekapolon*.

As we have seen, livestock holding is still one of the major causes and drivers of socio-economic differentiation in Lojom, and it is its intrinsic symbolic value used to create larger families and access free labour, rather than its productive feature per se, that is the more fundamental element making its acquisition still highly desirable for any man.

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<sup>154</sup> Interview with case study number #1.

## Conclusion

Available data on both human and cattle population in Karamoja is oftentimes unreliable. However, despite the overall scarce and poor quality of available data, the finding of a decreased cattle/human ratio over time can hardly be contested. This is due to a steady trend of cattle population from 1959 to 2014, in tandem with an exceptional rise in human population growth, which reinforces the underlying argument of the historical process of 'de-pastoralisation' in Karamoja.

Nonetheless, the few people in Lojom who have been able to retain their cattle over time are better off in comparison to others. Livestock possession is in fact still a major cause of socio-economic differentiation in Lojom through three main drivers: firstly, it gives access to an extended family network that can be exploited for labour; secondly, it grants power and respect both in the village and among the extended family; and thirdly, it gives material advantages in agricultural production, in the form of capital and savings.

The productive advantages related to the possession of animals are limited, but the 'symbolic profits' are still strong and partly explain the current status of social differentiation in Lojom. While in the past the command over extended family labour was used for grazing, raiding and protecting the animals, presently, as will be shown in Chapters Six and Seven, it is used for agricultural and off-farm activities.

In conclusion, although livestock production is still a potential driver for accumulating wealth, the current system does not enable those who are presently stockless to return to livestock keeping. On the other hand, the few Big Men who still match traditional herd sizes mainly use this wealth to both legitimize their power and further increase their family and herd sizes through different economic activities.

## **6. Agricultural Production, Land and Tenure**

## Introduction

This chapter illustrates how the uneven social relations of production across social classes in Lojom feature as the underlying cause of the differences in agricultural production between the classes, and their social reproduction over time.

The year 2013 was ‘below-average’ in terms of harvest yield in the greater Iriiri area. However, the argument in this chapter is that the occurrence of years in which most farmers are not able to yield enough staple crops to meet their own subsistence (even in the most fertile areas of the region) is so frequent that, unless families have enough cash to buy food, chronic food insecurity is the most likely result. This entails that cultivation is an inherently risky enterprise, irrespectively of ‘bad’ or ‘good’ years. At the same time, this chapter will show how, even in 2013, some families in Lojom – mainly those belonging to the class of the better off – were still able to harvest a relatively high volume of crops compared to others. This finding demonstrates that, even in a year of near crop failure such as 2013, there are significant differences in terms of production among classes, which are due to the different social relationships within the overall production system.

This chapter suggests that the most significant aspects responsible for the diverse level of agricultural production among different social classes are related to the quantity of acres and the different locations of the plots of land owned, as well as unequal access to labour power and implements of production. What has emerged from the analysis is that, within the wealthier classes of Lojom, Big Men (male family heads) accumulate part of their wealth through the exploitation of family and wage labour, through which they are able to cultivate more acres of land and obtain larger harvests, both for the subsistence of their family members and for the market. Big Men in Lojom thus benefit from advantages provided by the historical process of ‘de-pastoralisation’ that has occurred among the Bokora, through which poor families have been entrenched in low food production and have had to undertake a set of different economic activities in order to earn a living (see Chapter Seven). This finding is in line with much of the literature on pastoralism focused on diversification, which highlights that ‘poor people are pushed into alternative livelihood strategies due to

poverty while wealthy pastoralist diversify as a risk avoidance strategy' (McCabe *et al.*, 2010: 322).<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> See, also Brockington, 2001; Little *et al.*, 2001; Homewood *et al.*, 2009.

## 6.1 General Production

### 6.1.1 Production and climate

Following the great famine of 1980, many families living in central Karamoja migrated towards the western and southern parts of the region. These areas were relatively more fertile in comparison to the rest of the region – which used to be the dry-season grazing areas of the Karimojong herdsman –, and are presently permanently inhabited by settled families, the majority of which pursue more than one occupation to make a living.

While in the 1980s Bokora families moved to Iriiri after losing their livestock due to warfare and famine, later on in the 1990s and 2000s, people continued to migrate to the area for different reasons, among which were the finding of fertile land next to Mount Napak, where rainfall is generally more reliable and chances of obtaining good harvests that can be marketable along the main road in Iriiri are higher. As illustrated in Chapter Three, Karimojong resettlements in the wetter areas and the introduction of ‘improved’ seeds (Wilson, 1985) were among the major rural development plans for the region, in the 1980s. Other humanitarian support, and specifically that of Catholic missionaries, was directed at strengthening the provision of services and enhancing agricultural production for those stockless pastoralists (herders) who had resettled (see Chapter Three).

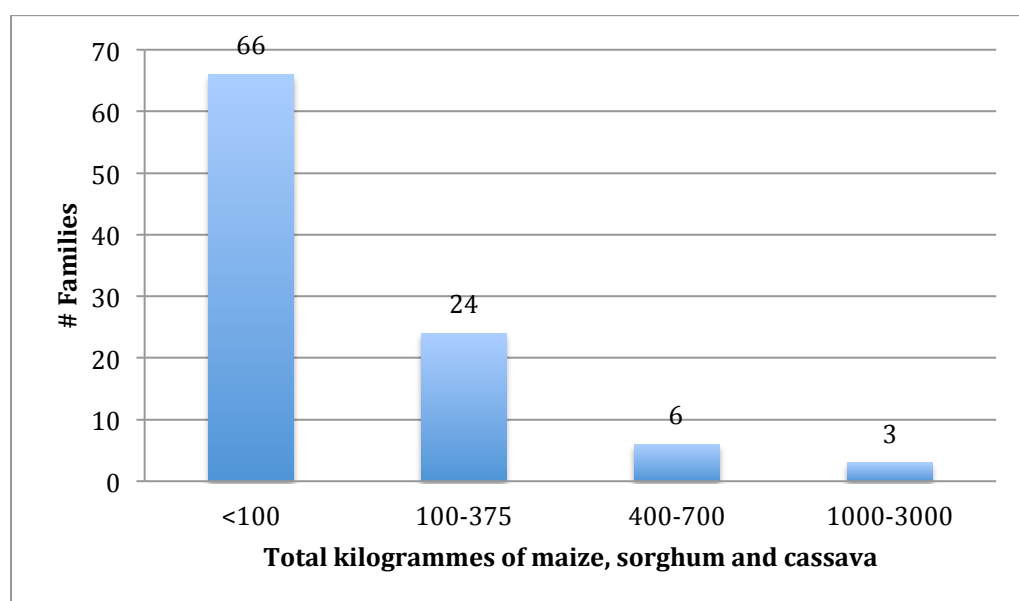
Agricultural production is not a recent activity in the Karamoja region, especially among women, who have always been in charge of farming and domestic labour. Traditionally, women decided how much land was cultivated, what types of crops were planted and in which locations (see Chapter Three). However, in the past cultivation was a marginal investment and the harvest only supplemented the main food production, which revolved around livestock husbandry (ibid.).

One of the outcomes of the transformation of the modes of production that followed the shift in lifestyle for most male inhabitants in Lojom, from traditional semi-nomadic pastoral life to being sedentarized stockless peasants, was the emergence of

new production relations between men and women.<sup>156</sup> These livelihood and gender dynamic changes have made the role of farm and off-farm production and female labour more central to people's survival than ever before. As will be clearer in the course of this chapter, the emerging food production system, in most years, is not sufficient to provide a family's subsistence requirement. Despite this, the area of Iriiri is considered one of the most fertile places in Karamoja, and the development plan of the current Government (NRM) and other development partners is to transform Iriiri into a major 'food granary' which will supply food to the rest of the region (see Chapter Nine).

Presently, the majority of families in Lojom produce very little in terms of crops harvested. Data shows (Figure 8) that two thirds<sup>157</sup> (66.7%) of the families living in the village during 2013 harvested less than 100 kg. of the major staple crops such as sorghum, maize and cassava.<sup>158</sup>

**Figure 8: Average major crops harvested per family in Lojom in 2013<sup>159</sup>**



Source: Author's census survey

Between 2013-2014, only a few families were likely to be food secure from their own production. The fact that Lojom's food production in 2013 was insufficient to meet families' food subsistence is also supported by the data concerning the food basket

<sup>156</sup> Intra-households dynamics will be extensively covered in Chapter Ten.

<sup>157</sup> Less than 100 kg. of either sorghum, maize or cassava.

<sup>158</sup> See Chapter Two on the limitations and difficulties on measuring harvests in kg.

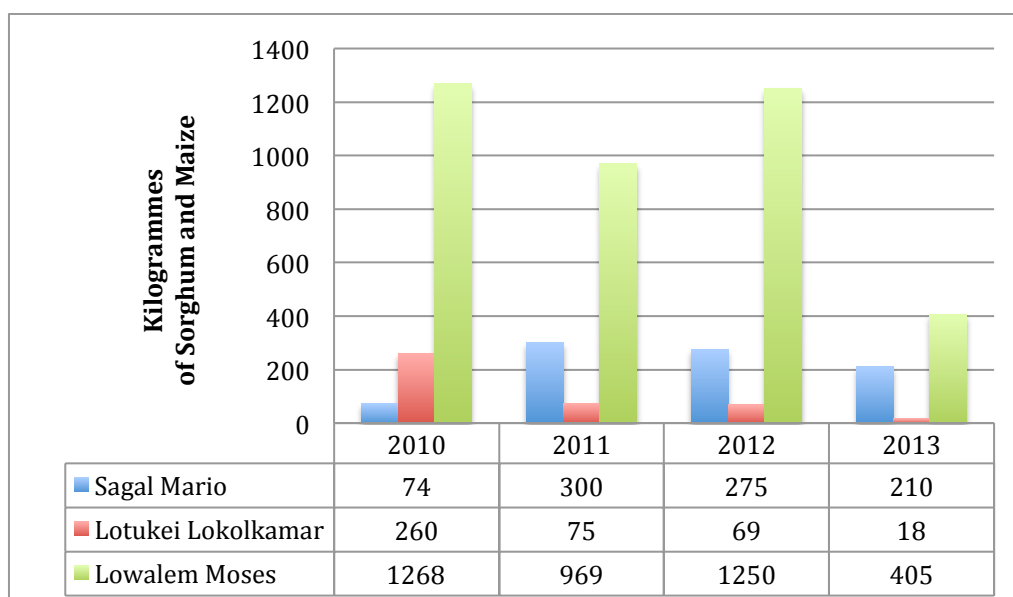
<sup>159</sup> The period of the census – January and February 2014 – are months in which families in Karamoja still rely on the food stock from the production of 2013.



(see Appendix II), which shows that the most consumed types of food were mostly acquired through market exchanges.

According to other informants, the farming season of 2013 in the area of Iriiri sub-county was considered 'below-average' in terms of harvest, mainly due to an 'unusual' dry spell between May and July that did not allow crops to germinate in many places, followed by heavy rainfall and water logging (local floods) which negatively affected overall crop production (see Table 12).<sup>160</sup> On the contrary, the previous three years, namely 2012, 2011 and 2010, were considered 'good years', and data in Lojom from three families belonging to the middle class (see Table 11) show both the low production of 2013, as well as the uneven amount of harvest amongst families.

**Table 11: Sample of middle class production trends (2010-2013)**



Source: Author's data

In the following year (2014), the average harvest of all crops per family in the whole of the Napak district (600 households/families sampled), was 187 kg. (Welthungerhilfe, 2015), whereas, in Lojom in 2013, the average total of sorghum, cassava and maize was only 156.7 kg., a difference of 16.2 per cent. Also, in 2015 the level of production was not very different in comparison to the previous years. In the Iriiri sub-county only, for instance, the production of sorghum and maize per family was averaging 194.61 kg. (WFP, 2015); 55.6 per cent more than what was harvested by

<sup>160</sup> The dry spell of 2013 hit the whole region (WFP, 2014).

each family in Lojom in 2013 (108.2 kg. per family). This illustrates how, at least in the years between 2013 and 2015, most families in Iriiri could not rely on their own food production to secure their subsistence.

Given the 2010-2015 data presented above for both Iriiri and Lojom, the majority of the farmers can be defined as 'marginal farmers'.<sup>161</sup> What follows is that, for the majority of families in Lojom, farming is only one of the many economic activities they undertake in order to secure their subsistence, while food needs are met through the erratic provision of relief aid (see Chapter Nine), the production and sale of petty commodities in the market of Iriiri, and the sale of their labour (see Chapter Seven) within the 'salaried economy' (cf. Vincent, 1974).

NGOs and government stakeholders (including the Christian missionaries) often emphasize how the 'green belts' of Karamoja receive high amounts of rainfalls – i.e., for Iriiri around 900 mm a year (Dyson-Hudson, 1958; Knighton, 2005) – and that, given the alleged high fertility of these areas, low harvests are mainly due to the Karamojong's poor farming techniques and/or 'laziness' due to the 'dependency syndrome' caused by the prolonged provision of relief aid (see Chapter Nine). However, residents of Iriiri and Lojom face many challenges in realizing good harvests. Factors include successive droughts, water logging, and crop diseases which affect some narrow areas while sparing others and progressively exacerbate the gaps in production and productivity between some families, hence creating a divide in terms of self-sustainability. Indeed, Karamoja is a 'non-equilibrium ecosystem' (cf. Scoones, 1995a) in which frequent droughts and erratic rainfall are typical features, as is true for most arid and semi-arid lands. As Gartrell (1988) has summarized,

[In Karamoja] the environment is more arid than these averages [rainfall] suggest, because of great variability of rainfall in space and time, high evaporation rate, hard soils and heavy runoff. (Gartrell, 1988: 196)

In the area of Iriiri, for example, the distribution of rainfall is incredibly patchy, whereby one plot of land may receive good rainfall whereas a few miles further the rainfall is nil. Usually, in Lojom, and also in the rest of the region, farmers prepare the

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<sup>161</sup> While for Bernstein (2010: 105-106) 'marginal farmers' and 'too poor to farm' are two analytical categories used to describe the same type of farmers, in my analysis (see Table 15, p. 167) these two categories are used to describe two different classes.

land and then wait for the first rain before starting to plant.<sup>162</sup> This is also due to the fact that, before the first rain, the land is often too hard to be worked by hand hoes. Consequently farmers wait for the first rains, prepare the land and sow seed, but they do this only after the rains have become consistent. However, nobody is aware of when the rain starts and ends, and the situation has worsened with the effect of climate change, which has made the length of the growing season shorter and more unpredictable (DanChurchAid, 2010; Welthungerhilfe, 2015). When looking at the recent dry spells that have occurred in Karamoja between 2006 and 2015 (see Table 12), the 2013 climate condition in Iriiri should not be considered exceptional for the region.

**Table 12: Description of the climate in Karamoja between 2006 and 2015<sup>163</sup>**

| <b>YEARS</b> | <b>Description of the climate</b>   |
|--------------|---|
| <b>2006</b>  | Overall poor rainfall. Dry season characterized by sporadic rainfall (4;11;15)  |
| <b>2007</b>  | Dry season characterized by sporadic rainfall (4;11;15)                         |
| <b>2008</b>  | Severe drought. No more rains from July onwards (1;4;10)                        |
| <b>2009</b>  | Dry spell (4;16;21)   |
| <b>2010</b>  | Good rains (2;8;17)   |
| <b>2011</b>  | Good rains (2;7;9)  |
| <b>2012</b>  | Good rains (2;6; 20)  |
| <b>2013</b>  | Dry spell between May and July (2;14;19)  |
| <b>2014</b>  | Dry spell from mid-April to May, in some parts even until June or July (2;5;13) |
| <b>2015</b>  | Dry spell between July and September (3;12;18)                                  |

Sources:

- (1) Red Cross 2008; (2) Data during my time living in Karamoja
- (3) WFP, 2015; (4) WFP, 2013 CFSVA
- (5) Welthungerhilfe, 2015; (6) FEWS NET, 2012
- (7) DHO ACF UNICEF, 2011; (8) DHO ACF UNICEF, 2010
- (9) FAO, 2012 (10) WFP, 2008
- (11) Stites et al, 2007a; (12) FEWS NET, 2015
- (13) FEWS NET, 2014; (14) FEWS NET, 2013
- (15) FEWS NET, 2007; (16) FEWS NET, 2009
- (17) FEWS NET, 2010; (18) IPC, 2015

<sup>162</sup> See the agricultural calendar in Appendix III.

<sup>163</sup> This description of the climate is meant to be a regional overview and it does not include important climate differences of each location within the region.

(19) WFP, 2014; (20) WFP, 2012

(21) FAO, 2010

Overall, in the best-case scenario, the highly erratic rainfalls in Iriiri and Lojom cause many farmers' tardiness and lack of organization in sowing, and, in the worst case scenario, they cause repeated crop failures for many. Given the highly demanding labour activities necessary to realize a 'decent' harvest in a context of precarious living conditions, in Lojom, farmers' behaviour towards cultivation is often very prudent. Being a prudent farmer in Lojom is not a sign of 'laziness' or of aid-dependent behaviour, as is usually portrayed by external actors (see Chapter Nine), it is rather due to the high level of uncertainty concerning the environment, whereby a good harvest is perceived to be more the result of god's (locally *akuj*) will, rather than the outcome of a large and appropriate investment of labour.

### **6.1.2 Production and social classes**

Though the agricultural production of 2013 in Karamoja was defined as 'below-average', is not as unusual, as is instead often presented in food-security reports and newspapers. It is, in fact, one of the many near crop failure seasons that have frequently characterized agricultural production in the region.<sup>164</sup> However, despite the generally low production of 2013, in Lojom there were still differences in terms of harvest across the four social classes. For instance, the class of better off farmers cultivated an average of 18 acres of land for each family, and their production, in terms of kilogrammes of sorghum and maize harvested, was between six and nine times higher than for other classes. Families from the middle class also harvested more in comparison to the poor and very poor classes, although the difference is much less significant. As summarized in Table 13 below, overall, across the same sample, there is a correlation between wealth and the harvest of the major staple crops (sorghum, maize and cassava) gathered.

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<sup>164</sup> Similar production results have been reported in 2014 for the whole district and in 2015 for Iriiri sub-county only.

**Table 13: Average harvest per family for each class in Lojom in 2013<sup>165</sup>**

| SOCIAL CLASSES   | LAND CULTIVATED (in acres) | AVERAGE KILOGRAMMES MAJOR STAPLE CROPS PER CLASS |       |         | TOTAL CROPS <sup>166</sup> PRODUCTION (Kg/Family) | TOTAL CROPS PRODUCTION (Kg/individual) |
|------------------|----------------------------|--|-------|---------|---|--|
|                  |                            | Sorghum  | Maize | Cassava |   |  |
| Better off (N=4) | 18                         | 240  | 550   | 800     | 1590  | 1.1                                    |
| Middle (N=13)    | 2.8                        | 81.7   | 46.2  | 5.7     | 133.6   | 1.1                                    |
| Poor (N=56)      | 2.1                        | 30.7   | 39.5  | 23.1    | 93.3  | 0.2                                    |
| Very poor (N=26) | 2                          | 54.4   | 16.4  | 9.1     | 79.9  | 0.3                                    |

Source: Author's census survey

All better off families are polygynous and have more family members who depend on their food production. Therefore, in terms of production per person, there is no difference between the better off and the middle classes. As indicated in the previous section, the average production of major crops per class was particularly low in 2013, with 67 families in Lojom, across all classes, harvesting less than 100 kg. each, an amount that is close to a complete crop failure. However, none of these extremely low-yielding family producers are among the better off class, whereas they make up 66.1 per cent of the middle class, followed by 64.3 per cent of the poor, and 84.6 per cent of the very poor classes. Unsurprisingly, the low outcome of agricultural production is also associated with extremely low agricultural productivity or low yield per acre. Table 14.1 below shows the general low yield of the land owned by the people living in Lojom across the four social classes.

<sup>165</sup> Table 13 – The data on postharvest major dry crops is not intended to be entirely accurate because calculating the exact kilogrammes harvested by each family for each crop has proved to be very challenging. Therefore, this figure is only intended to indicate both the low level of agricultural production and its uneven level in terms of harvest across the four classes in Lojom. With this purpose in mind, I believe that the data is solid; the level of production is highly below any potential threshold for families' food security from their own production that, even with more accurate data on production, the underlying argument could still hardly be reversed.

<sup>166</sup> This data does not include other important crops such as beans, for which it was difficult to measure weight.

**Table 14.1: Average yield of sorghum and maize per acre for each social class<sup>167</sup>**

| SOCIAL CLASSES             | KILOGRAMMES HARVESTED PER ONE ACRE |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Better off</b><br>(N=4) | 88.3                               |
| <b>Middle</b><br>(N=13)    | 47.7                               |
| <b>Poor</b><br>(N=56)      | 44.7                               |
| <b>Very poor</b><br>(N=26) | 39.7                               |

Source: Author's census survey

According to the Ugandan Bureau of Statistics (UBOS, 2010),<sup>168</sup> the average staple crop productivity (or cereal yield) in the neighbouring region of northern Uganda in 2013 was about 480 kg. per acre.<sup>169</sup> Over the same time period, in Lojom, the better off class had a crop yield of 88.3 kg. per acre, which is six times less than the average yield in the neighbouring region.<sup>170</sup> Furthermore, despite the better off and middle classes owning more acres of land than other classes and their yield per acre being higher, proportionally, the number of acres cultivated as opposed to the acres owned is nearly the same across the different classes. Table 14.2 below shows this ratio across the four classes.

**Table 14.2: Acres owned versus acres cultivated<sup>171</sup>**

| SOCIAL CLASSES             | LAND IN ACRES |            |            |
|----------------------------|---------------|------------|------------|
|                            | Owned         | Cultivated | Percentage |
| <b>Better off</b><br>(N=4) | 66.2          | 18         | 27.2       |
| <b>Middle</b><br>(N=13)    | 10            | 2.8        | 28.0       |
| <b>Poor</b><br>(N=56)      | 7.8           | 2.1        | 26.9       |
| <b>Very poor</b><br>(N=26) | 6.8           | 2          | 29.4       |

Source: Author's census survey

<sup>167</sup> While the data on the total number of acres cultivated includes all crops planted by a family such as cassava, sun flowers, millet, beans etc., the data on harvests does not include all the crops *harvested* during 2013. Unfortunately, I could not calculate the exact yield per acre, as I could not disaggregate the data per each crop harvested in a portion of land.

<sup>168</sup> *Uganda Census of Agriculture 2008/09*, Volume III, 2010.

<sup>169</sup> One acre equals to about 0.40 hectare.

<sup>170</sup> According to the World Bank, in 2013, in Uganda, the average amount of land harvested per acre – including wheat, rice, maize, barley, oats, rye, millet, sorghum, buckwheat, and mixed grains – amounted to 857 kg.

<sup>171</sup> The data on production (Table 14.2) may not be fully accurate. However it is interesting to note how the rate of owned versus cultivated land remains almost the same across different social classes.

Despite the fact that those who are better off are able to make their own land relatively more productive (see Table 14.1), in 2013 they still decided to farm only a small portion of the land they owned. Therefore, both poorer and wealthier classes considered the investment in agricultural production in 2013 to be economically and remuneratively low, as well as highly risky, to the point that it was not worth the effort of cultivating most of their land. This behaviour is not so different from traditional patterns as the Karamojong have never invested all their labour power in cultivation. As already pointed out by Quam (1978),

The Karimojong do not cultivate their land to the fullest possible extent. They expend a limited amount of labour resources on agriculture, not even bothering to fertilize their fields when manure is plentiful. (Quam, 1978: 54)

The inherently risky activity of cultivation, with its marginal yield, was traditionally done by the women, whereas the strongly productive and socially significant activity of herding was conducted by men.

Among other factors, this behaviour towards farming is also motivated by the generally very high chances of total crop failure, that has over time increased in probability, from one out of four during the 1950s (Dyson-Hudson, 1966), to one out of three between 1979 and 1999 (Gray, 2000). As a result, due to the often low production outcomes, a general sense of distrust regarding agricultural production is embedded in the behaviour of Lojom's residents, and also signifies the relatively low importance of farming, which makes many families who have lost livestock over time, unable to become full-time farmers.

While in 2013 both Lokwaakou and Adupinkal, from the better off class, made around 13.5 per cent of their total income through the sale of crops at the market, they did report that, in the few 'good years', the sale of agricultural production at the market is their major source of income.<sup>172</sup> In the next section, I will illustrate how few families in Lojom are able to realize a surplus in agricultural production, whereas the majority of families are trapped in low food production.

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<sup>172</sup> Interviews with case studies numbers #1 and #2.

## 6.2 Means of Production

### 6.2.1 Labour

While agricultural production in Lojom in 2013 was near to crop failure for many, families in the better off class were able to produce a small surplus for the market. This chapter examines the underlying causes of uneven agricultural production across the different social classes, that reveal the social structure (and labour organization) that is operating behind agricultural production in Lojom. The low production of 2013 may not justify the existence of this social structure, but, in 'good years', such as 2010 and 2011, farming was a major source of income for most families in the better off and middle classes.

The following analysis is based on the different levels of access and combinations of means of production, such as labour, land and capital, that shed light on the cause of the diverse production outcomes across classes. Similarly, in the 1980s, Mamdani (2008) investigated social differentiation in two villages in central Uganda and found that,

[...] social differentiation of the peasantry does not have to develop around differentiation in landed property. It may develop around differentiation in any one of the elements of the labour process: land, labour or its implements. (Mamdani, 2008: 197)

Traditionally, in Karamoja the social division of labour has assigned specific roles and responsibilities to men and women, elders and youths, and rich and poor families (see Chapter Three). Currently, these differences are more nuanced, although important elements from the past persist. Furthermore, in Lojom new modes of production, accumulation and social reproduction are bringing about different strategies for the social division of labour across classes and within families are in place. For instance, agricultural production consists of three major types of labour organization: family labour, farmer groups,<sup>173</sup> and casual agricultural labour (*leja-*

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<sup>173</sup> Among the Iteso, Vincent (1971) referred to farmer groups with the term 'work parties'.



*leja*).<sup>174</sup> Depending on social class, there are differences in both production relations and control of labour and other means of production.

In my census survey I show that, in Lojom, the better off class is formed by all polygynous families, and in 2013 these families cultivated more land and harvested more kilogrammes of staple crops than other classes (see Chapter Four). Generally, in Lojom there was a strong correlation across all classes between the number of wives married to the family head, the number of acres cultivated, and the amount of harvest gathered. The major argument in this section is that polygynous families were able to achieve higher agricultural production because they had access to a greater supply of labour power, primarily in the form of unpaid family labour and secondarily through the hiring of wage labour in the form of both individuals and groups. Joan Vincent has emphasized similar labour aspects among the Iteso to the extent that, ‘the value is people’ and ‘the amount of land owned is less important in determining production than the amount of labour that a man can call upon’ (Vincent, 1971: 190-191).

Within polygynous families, male family heads operate as ‘managers’, allocating their family members to different farming activities as though they are their labour power. More specifically, in agricultural production, family labour within polygynous families represents ‘sexual relationships of production’ (cf. Mies, 1999) based on the following dichotomy: non-producer husbands or men heads versus producer wives and female relatives. This production relation entails the exploitation of the wives’ and female relatives’ labour for both farming and off-farming activities (see Chapter Seven), regardless of what social class they belong to. As a result, male family heads from the better off and middle classes are able to live beyond the limits of their survival needs through the exploitation of their female family members’ labour. This is a sign of the capacity of men to appropriate the surplus labour of their family members (women in particular, as men tend to be more independent; see also Chapter Ten).

Traditionally, in Karamoja, men invested in family development by marrying as many women as possible, through large bridewealth payments, which aimed at increasing their social prestige and prominence, enlarging their family alliances (and

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<sup>174</sup> Farm and off-farm casual labourers are both locally named *leja-leja*. I therefore have to use English terms to differentiate between farm and off-farm activities.

members) and herding associations, and ultimately accumulating more wealth/capital (see Chapter Three). Currently, in places such as Iriiri and Lojom, extended families provide mutual support in times of need and herding labour for those who still own livestock, as per tradition, and they also provide labour power to work the land and carry out any other activity decided by the male head to accumulate further wealth.

As shown in the previous section, in the 1980s, the population density in the area of Iriiri was still low and farmers cultivated vast portions of communal land opportunistically, with a relatively low investment in labour, thus reducing the negative outcome related to environmental variability. On the contrary, at present, only those who own or have access to several plots of land located in different areas are able to achieve the same strategy as in the past, namely, reducing the risk of crop failures by spreading cultivation across different plots of land. In particular, husbands married to several wives and owning several plots of land, allocate each wife to each plot of land.

Big Men like Ewapet, who lives in Lojom and belongs to the better off class, is married to seven wives. He used to be a wealthy livestock owner and currently he is still one of the major herd owners in the area of Iriiri, as well as one of the major crop producers in Lojom (though he had zero income from the sale of crops in 2013 when he harvested 1060 kg.). He possesses 20 acres of land located in different places due to the fact that, in the course of his life, he migrated to numerous villages before permanently settling in Lojom. In order to keep the rights of ownership over his plots of land and avoid that others take it away, he 'moved' his wives to the different locations. Three of his wives, for example, live in Losikait village, and each of them takes care of some 2-3 acres of his land. One of them is also in charge of his grinding mill. In addition, another wife was 'sent' by Ewapet to cultivate his land in Apeipuke, a location relatively far from Lojom but near the kraal where he keeps his animals. This system allows him to keep his land over time, while living elsewhere, and allows him to diversify cultivation of various plots of land, thus reducing the risk of crop failure. As he described it, having many wives living in different villages is a risk-spreading strategy similar to the old strategy of spreading the herd over different cattle camps to reduce

the potential impacts of raiding or disease.<sup>175</sup> Conversely, in the 1980s, wives of polygynous families all lived in the same *ere/manyatta*<sup>176</sup> home of their husband, and every wife had her own *ekal*,<sup>177</sup> whereas in present day Lojom the majority (79.4%) of polygynous families have at least one wife living outside the village. Having many wives living in different villages is, for male heads in Lojom, both a way to gain access and maintain rights of ownership over various plots of land.

As was analysed in the previous chapter, male heads of wealthy families all live in Iriiri, in charge of small shops and trading, while their wives stay in Lojom and/or other villages taking care of agricultural production and the family. Male heads move their wives between various villages whenever they choose, or call some of them to stay in town depending on their economic needs, the season and a specific production strategy.<sup>178</sup> Similarly, in the 1980s, in central Uganda, Mamdani (2008) found that,

In the village of Amwoma, there are three families which may be classified as capitalists, whose members have moved out of the labour process and whose income is more or less exclusively the result of exploitation. One reached this position as the result of differentiation from below; the other two, also the largest, exemplify the development of commercial comprador capital from above. Both are headed by men with important state positions who reside in urban areas, with their village operations managed by one of their wives. (Mamdani, 2008: 207)

Female labour is thus exploited by male heads of families through family structured labour, especially within polygynous arrangements. Through large family involvement in agricultural production, male heads are able to cultivate more acres of land and harvest more crops in comparison to smaller families. The surplus is then sold on the market for profit, which is available to male family heads only, as they decide how to spend it (see both Chapters Seven and Ten), and this eventually allows them to live beyond the limits of their survival needs. Therefore, access to many units of family or free labour power, and many acres of land placed in different locations are two of the most important pre-conditions that eventually enable male heads in Lojom to obtain a good level of harvest, as well as a surplus to invest in different economic

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<sup>175</sup> Interview with case study number #9.

<sup>176</sup> Interview with regional informant number #3 (see Appendix I).

<sup>177</sup> Traditionally, full brothers used to also live together in the same *ere* because of the possession of one common herd that kept them together (Gulliver, 1955). Again, the loss of animals suggests the reduced interest in and usefulness for full brothers living together.

<sup>178</sup> See the Agricultural Calendar in Appendix III.

activities.

### 6.2.2 Farmers groups

The second form of organization of labour present in Iriiri and Lojom is a sort of cooperative system among families in poor and very poor classes, which aims at overcoming their individual scarce availability of labour power, increase access to means of production, and increase their chances to work as groups within the labour market. These associations of poor peasants are named farmers groups<sup>179</sup> and are usually composed of 4-5 people, normally women but sometimes men, though their number is slowly increasing.

As already explained in Chapter Three, the idea of farmers groups was first promoted in Karamoja by the Catholic missionaries in the 1980s in the 'green belts', and was later proposed again by international organizations and NGOs who used them for rehabilitation projects such as food-for-work activities. In Iriiri, the use of farmers groups became popular especially during the forced disarmament exercise, when many families lost access to their oxen (see Chapter Five)<sup>180</sup> due to raiding, and ploughing the hard Karamojong land without the use of oxen became a major problem for many.

As a result, many farmers in Iriiri decided to cooperate amongst themselves, with the aim of making the labour process more intensive to compensate for the loss of draft power.<sup>181</sup> During the disarmament period, international organizations and NGOs formed various farmers groups. In the area of Iriiri and nearby villages, between 2005 and 2006, the first farmers group was called the *Napenanya* group, and it began in association with the food-for-assets projects implemented by the WFP. Members of the *Napenanya* group were, for example, mainly from the village of Naloret in the Iriiri sub-county.<sup>182</sup>

Currently, in Lojom, people forming farmers groups own small plots of land – approximately two acres – and they work on a rotating basis in each individual's garden. Besides the exchange of working days, it is customary that among members of

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<sup>179</sup> See Chapter Three on the history of the farmers groups.

<sup>180</sup> Interview with local leader number #2 (see Appendix I).

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

a farmers group, the landowner's wife offers some *kweete* as a sign of appreciation for the day of work at the garden.<sup>183</sup> Overall, this type of cooperative labour system is based on the exchange of labour days amongst poor family members. Within the poorer classes, farmers groups compensate their lack of extended family labour and the scarce access to oxen with a strategy that is more labour-intensive and based on a transaction of reciprocal labour relations.<sup>184</sup> Nevertheless, people belonging to farmers groups are 'marginal farmers' and need to pursue other occupations to earn a living (see Chapter Seven). In fact, members of these farmers groups may also work on someone else's land as a casual agricultural labourers (*leja-leja*). What was often expressed by members of these groups was, 'one morning I work with my farmer group and the following morning I work for money either as a farmer or as a casual labourer'.

Another reason for the existence of farmers groups is that these groups are hired by local Big Men, living both in Lojom and elsewhere, to work the land on their behalf. This is the third type of labour organization in Lojom, which is based on the labour market, through which Big Men living in Iriiri and in nearby villages (including Lojom) hire poor peasants for *leja-leja* at the cost of 3,000 UGX<sup>185</sup> per day (usually from 7-8 am to 1 pm). Big Men, such as Adupinkal and Lokwaakou, work as sort of 'foremen' or 'brokers' with 'their own people', calling on those who form their farmers groups. Whenever sufficient labour is not available from within their own families, both Adupinkal and Lokwaakou hire farmers groups to work their gardens, and to participate in governmental projects and NGO activities (see Chapter Nine).

While poor peasants with limited access to labour, oxen and ploughs find it helpful to be associated in a farmers group to increase their production, whenever agricultural activities require more heavy work, such as weeding, ploughing and harvesting,<sup>186</sup> wealthy families outsource and often exploit farmers groups or poor and very poor individuals through low wages, which at best guarantee labourers' simple reproduction. The majority of the people composing a farmers group are from the

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<sup>183</sup> Whenever *kweete* is not available it is bought at the market.

<sup>184</sup> Interview with local leader number #2 (see Appendix I).

<sup>185</sup> This amount is below what is defined as the poverty line of USD 1.25 per person per day.

<sup>186</sup> See Appendix III.

same village, as well as members of the same poor social classes. On the other hand, Big Men from each village work as ‘brokers’ to muster labour power, which has been organized in pre-existent farmer groups ready for any kind of work.

### 6.2.3 Capital (implements of production)

While capital usually includes seeds, fertilizers<sup>187</sup> and the technical ability of cultivation (human capital), in Lojom this capital is equally scarce (*ceteris paribus*) across all families, regardless of their social classes.<sup>188</sup> In fact, almost nobody uses tractors and fertilizers, and the number of families using both wells to irrigate their crops (6.1%) and animal manure to improve their farm’s productivity (3%) is very low. While nearly half of the families in Lojom possess an ox-drawn plough (44.4%), only one third (33%) of the families possess cattle, and this means that about 11 per cent of families in Lojom borrow or rent oxen on a regular basis, thus making their actual access rate higher than their possession rate.

In this section, what is meant by the term ‘capital’ is capital stock, which in Lojom is expressed through various families’ possession of tractors, cattle/oxen, ploughs, and hand hoes<sup>189</sup> – in other words, the implements of agricultural production. What differs depending on each class is that, in comparison to other classes, the better off class has access to tractors and possesses more head of cattle, ox-drawn ploughs and hand hoes. In particular, wealthier families cultivate either with a tractor (their own or rented) and/or a plough, drawn by their own oxen, whereas almost all poor and very poor families do not own cattle and plough mainly using hand hoes. The exchange system of the implements of production, which includes families borrowing oxen and ploughs, mainly operates between people of the same social class, both

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<sup>187</sup> In Lojom one family only uses fertilizers.

<sup>188</sup> According to Fausto Conter, overall, in all villages around Iriiri, including Lojom, fields are alternated between different staple crops across the years. For instance, two years of corn (wheat of Turkey) and one year of cassava. These are very different types of cultivation that exploit the soil differently. Otherwise, families leave the garden uncultivated for one year, regardless of their wealth status.

<sup>189</sup> Every year NGOs and local district offices provide a large number of agriculture inputs, such as hand hoes, cassava cuttings and different types of seeds. Therefore, access to these basic agricultural implements is never a problem for farmers in Iriiri and Lojom, to the extent that this phenomenon has been referred as ‘inputs dependency’.

through kinship<sup>190</sup> and friendship connections, thus making the actual rate of access higher than the formal rate of possession for the better off and middle classes (especially amongst Big Men).<sup>191</sup> Farmers from poor and very poor classes in Lojom highlighted lack of oxen among their primary, major problem (see Table 15) in agriculture, followed by repeated droughts and, lastly, scarce access to labour power.

**Table 15: Ranking of farmer's major problems in Lojom for each class**

| Farmers' problems            | Number and percentage of those offering a reason |            |     |        |      |      |      |           |      |
|------------------------------|--|------------|-----|--------|------|------|------|-----------|------|
|                              | Average  | Better off |     | Middle |      | Poor |      | Very Poor |      |
|                              | N=99   | N          | %   | N      | %    | N    | %    | N         | %    |
| Absence of land titles       | 0  | 0          | 0   | 0      | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0         | 0    |
| Scarce labour power          | 15   | 1          | 6.7 | 1      | 6.7  | 10   | 66.7 | 3         | 20   |
| Scarce agricultural inputs   | 7  | 0          | 0   | 2      | 28.6 | 4    | 57.1 | 1         | 14.3 |
| No oxen                      | 39   | 1          | 2.6 | 4      | 10.3 | 24   | 61.5 | 10        | 25.6 |
| Crop diseases                | 5  | 1          | 20  | 1      | 20   | 1    | 20   | 2         | 40   |
| Government land confiscation | 0  | 0          | 0   | 0      | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0         | 0    |
| Drought                      | 22   | 1          | 4.5 | 2      | 9.1  | 13   | 59.1 | 6         | 27.3 |
| Floods                       | 4  | 0          | 0   | 1      | 25   | 2    | 50   | 1         | 25   |
| I do not own land            | 4  | 0          | 0   | 1      | 25   | 0    | 0    | 3         | 75   |
| I do not have enough land    | 0  | 0          | 0   | 0      | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0         | 0    |
| Other                        | 3  | 0          | 0   | 1      | 33.3 | 2    | 66.6 | 0         | 0    |

Source: Author's census survey

While the poor class in Lojom is actively engaged in farming and has partially overcome scarcity of labour power with the farmers group system, their major problem remains lack of oxen to increase their production, as well as repeated droughts over which they have no control. For the families belonging to the very poor class, the scarcity of labour power does not significantly impact them as they are barely engaged in farming activities as producers and, in fact, they have been defined as 'too poor to farm'.

The different levels of access to the implements of production can also be observed within an individual family. In Lojom and Iriiri, Big Men in agricultural production are in charge of tractors and ox-drawn ploughs, while their wives and overall female family members use hand hoes.<sup>192</sup> Given the fact that Big Men are married to more than one wife, this finding explains why even wealthier classes own

<sup>190</sup> What is meant by kinship is a 'relationship between persons based on descent or marriage' (Stone, 2000: 5). For more information on kinship connections in Lojom, see Chapter Ten.

<sup>191</sup> Interview with regional leader number #2 (see Appendix I).

<sup>192</sup> See Appendix III.

more hand hoes in comparison to other classes, and confirms once again the unbalanced labour dynamics between men and women (see Chapter Ten). Theoretically, a family having access to more implements entails both a higher number of acres cultivated and higher land productivity. For example, cultivating with ox-drawn ploughs rather than hand hoes increases both the quantity of land cultivated and its yield per acre. Specifically in Lojom, the use of ox-drawn ploughs is confined to turning over the land and the more the land is turned over, the richer it is for production and the more likely the yield is increased. Those families who use hand hoes, for instance, can dig the land only between 10 cm and 15 cm, while an ox-drawn plough reaches down to 25 cm, and a tractor between 30 cm and 50 cm.<sup>193</sup> In 2013, while the average yield per acre in Lojom was incredibly low, Big Men with access to both tractors or ox-drawn ploughs and more units of labour power (through family members) partially overcame the low productivity of the land due the climate by cultivating more acres of land more efficiently.

The better off class thus achieves higher agricultural production compared to other classes for two major reasons: firstly, they control more units of labour power both in the form of family labour and hired labour in the market, which allows them to cultivate more acres of land in comparison to the others; and secondly, they possess more and different types of implements of production such as tractors, oxen and ox-drawn ploughs, which, in 2013, resulted in an increase in cultivated land, with a minor impact on the yield per acre, thus producing a larger harvest.

#### **6.2.4 Land tenure**

The last means of production that must be analysed in relation to the different social classes is the land: both its tenure, quantity and level of fertility. Many Bokora families, as well as other Karimojong sections, are currently still migrating from central Karamoja to the area of Iriiri, thus gaining access to and ownership of its land.<sup>194</sup> Despite a growing population in the area and increasing pressure over the available land, acquiring land in Lojom is not yet a major issue. Around villages in the area,

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<sup>193</sup> Interview with regional informant number #9 (see Appendix I).

<sup>194</sup> The argument that there is still a surplus of land for cultivation in Lojom is reinforced by the evidence that, on average, all the families cultivated only 28 per cent of the land they own (Table 12.2).



available land is still abundant, most inhabitants of Lojom are in fact landowners, and only a few families are landless (see Chapter Four). Therefore, the phenomena of land exploitation by landlords is a marginal event, and this is illustrated by the fact that only six families in Lojom are landless, and, for example, during the farming seasons of 2013, none of the better off families rented out land. As a result, landlord-tenant relations are few at the moment, although there are also few families who own large plots of land.<sup>195</sup> In fact, the phenomenon of 'landlordism' in Lojom is currently not a barrier to those who are willing to pursue cultivation; however, with the increase of population due to migration and natural demographic growth, the consequences of 'de-pastoralisation' and the formalization of individual land titles, 'landlordism' in this area may become a major issue for future generations.<sup>196</sup> For now, Big Men from the better off and middle classes operate more as 'rural capitalists' than as landlords, exploiting different types of labour organizations rather than collecting rent from their possession of land.

Among the inhabitants of Karamoja there is presently a heightened concern over government 'land grabbing' in the region. In reality, evidence of 'land grabbing' only exists in specific cases, such as in the exploitation of minerals in Moroto District and in the enclosure of vast portions of fertile land across the region, under the Uganda Wildlife Authority (Rugadya *et al.*, 2013). The negative consequences of this land alienation by the Wildlife Authority have also been experienced across the southern border, for instance, amongst residents living in the Teso region (Kandel, 2016).

General concern with regards to government 'land grabbing' in Karamoja is expressed by both an elite of highly educated Karamojong citizens, mostly through social media such as Facebook blogs (e.g. Karamoja Development Forum), and by peasants from a specific part of the region. In the absence of attested evidence regarding systematic 'land grabbing' by the government, these high levels of alarm over government activities appear to be mainly tied to historical reasons, whereby the central government has been perceived as the major actor in the 'depredation' of the

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<sup>195</sup> There are cases of free borrowing of land between affines and friends.

<sup>196</sup> This finding is opposite to what is generally and presently depicted by local leaders and media in Karamoja.

Karamojong wealth. The recent disarmament programme is one of the latest government interventions that is identified as the major cause of 'livestock dispossession' by many.

Many informants living in the area around Iriiri agree that the land in Lojom and adjacent villages is fairly fertile, with differences depending on each garden. For instance, during the rainy seasons, in some gardens there is water logging, which negatively effects the harvest.<sup>197</sup> On the other hand, 35 per cent of the families from Lojom stated that they have farmed on a favourable site during the farming season in 2013. As was previously explained, the term 'favourable' relates to the conjectural climate conditions of that year rather than to particular features of the garden. This does not include the eight per cent of families that had access to permanent water sources (mainly through boreholes) for farming purposes, in the vicinity of their land. However, levels of wealth and fertility of land correlate highly with the majority (75%) of better off families that farmed fertile land, while other families show lower figures – respectively, 38.5 per cent of the middle, 33.9 per cent of the poor, and 30.8 per cent of the very poor. However, given the overall low yield per acre, it appears that the potential difference in fertility levels across the gardens in Lojom was not so significant in 2013. Table 16 below shows on average the allocation of the different means of production across each social class.

**Table 16: Average allocation of means of production for each class**

| SOCIAL CLASSES      | LAND<br>(in acres) |            |                                 | LABOUR <sup>1</sup><br># of units of family labour | CAPITAL STOCK or IMPLEMENTS |                       |             |               |
|---------------------|--------------------|------------|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|---------------|
|                     | owned              | cultivated | percentage owned/<br>cultivated |  | # of hand hoes              | # of ox-drawn ploughs | # of cattle | # of tractors |
| Better off<br>(N=4) | 66.2               | 18         | 27.2                            | 36   | 21.5                        | 4.3                   | 24          | 0.25          |
| Middle<br>(N=13)    | 10                 | 2.8        | 28.0                            | 9.1  | 4.9                         | 0.7                   | 3.3         | 0             |
| Poor<br>(N=56)      | 7.8                | 2.1        | 26.9                            | 8.9  | 4.8                         | 0.6                   | 1.5         | 0             |
| Very poor<br>(N=26) | 6.8                | 2          | 29.4                            | 9.2  | 4.4                         | 0.3                   | 0.2         | 0             |

Source: Author's census survey

<sup>197</sup> Interview with case study number #3 (see Appendix I).

In conclusion, both land access and fertility are not sufficient factors to explain the different levels of harvest across the four classes in Lojom, with other means of production, such as labour and capital stock, featuring as the key elements in the uneven productive outputs of acres cultivated and total harvest.

## 6.3 Accumulation in Agriculture

### 6.3.1 Agrarian class relations

While the diverse combinations of the means of production are important to understand the uneven level of agricultural production across different social classes in Lojom, this does not reveal the particular social relations of production among classes, which have entrenched most families in exploitative relations that reproduce their low food production over time.

The overall low food production in Lojom has established specific material and social conditions whereby the majority of families have a chronic need for cash to buy food in order to sustain a living. This material condition makes most families' chances of survival dependent upon trading in town and upon the daily employment opportunities provided by few Big Men employers, who are living in the area of Iriiri and the adjacent villages – including Lojom (see Chapter Seven). On the other hand, families belonging to the better off class are able to be food self-sufficient, at least in years of good harvest, solely through their own food production, retaining a larger number of family members who then become exploited by the Big Men as *leja-leja*, thus establishing a sort of 'domestic mode of production' (Dahl, 1987) (see Chapter Ten). Similarly, Whitehead (2004) found that in upper east Ghana 'Heads that attract and retain many members lead households that are strong and wealthy.' This is in turn related to the fact that:

a small minority of much wealthier households were able to take advantage of a virtuous circle whereby a more successful domestic economic enterprise led to the recruitment and retention of more family members, which led to more farming and other economic success. Additionally, these households were better able to take up opportunities in bullock ploughing, cash cropping, and non-farm income. (Whitehead, 2004: 3)

Whitehead's findings apply to the case study of Lojom in which Big Men not only benefit from the economic opportunities provided by their extended families, but also increase their local leadership and influence through their ability to attract as many family members as possible.

In terms of class relations, this state of affairs generates two types of dependencies: firstly, chances of survival of poorer classes become dependent on the salary issued by the wealthier classes, and secondly, extended family members, especially women, become dependent on the food and means of production provided by Big Men from the better off and middle classes. These unequal social and gender relations of production are exploited by wealthier classes, and specifically by Big Men living in Lojom and other places, through low wages and free family labour in exchange for food. For the poor class, the right to their labour and the power over their reproduction belong to the better off class and, to an extent, to the middle class, who are both employers and family heads. Similar dynamics among classes were found by Mamdani (2008) in central Uganda in the 1980s where,

petty profits so accumulated through a rich peasant-type operation – combining family labour with small-scale exploitation, made possible by hiring labour power or renting land or instruments of labour – are now invested in trade. (Mamdani, 2008: 206)

As a result, for the first time in the history of Karamoja, the agricultural sector in Lojom shows three agrarian class relations, namely: ‘rural capitalist’, ‘rural peasants’, and people who are ‘too poor to farm’ (cf. Whitehead, 2004). The middle class is not distributed evenly and it is rather divided into two sub-classes of male and female heads. While the male heads of this class show the same production relations of their counterpart in the better off class (Big Men), the female heads, despite being free from the exploitative measures of the husbands, show production relations that are more similar to the ‘rural peasants’. As wives of ex-Big Men, their wealth is, in fact, more symbolic than material (see Chapter Ten). Table 17 summarizes the agrarian production relations across the different social classes.

**Table 17: Agrarian class relations**

| <b>Social Classes</b> | <b>Production relations</b>  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Better off<br>(N=4)   | The Better off class is the ruling class made of families of affine and patrilineage. Big Men of this class are non-producers, who operate as ‘managers’, exploiting both female family (kin dependents) and cheap wage labour (‘rural capitalist’). In the ‘family-worked farm’ (cf. Bernstein, 2010), once family labour has been exhausted, <i>leja-leja</i> from poorer classes are hired for both cash-crops production and off-farm activities. In ‘good |

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
|                     | years' they realize an agricultural surplus that is controlled by Big Men   |
| Middle<br>(N=13)    | The Middle class is divided in 2 sub-classes. One sub-class is similar to the 'rural capitalist' class, formed by younger and potential upcoming new Big Men, related to the actual Big Men from the better off class, from which they get access to food and some of the means of production. The other sub-class is formed by female-headed families and they act more like the poor class  |
| Poor<br>(N=56)      | The largest group of families, organized as 'marginal farmers' (cf. Bernstein, 2010), for whom subsistence is never secure through their own food production only. Fundamentally, this class is made of 'rural peasants'. They command both few units of family labour and implements of production, and partially overcome their labour and capital scarcities with the use of farmers groups. They sell their labour power both as members of farmers groups and as individual agricultural casual labourers ( <i>leja-leja</i> ) |
| Very poor<br>(N=26) | Low productive families, mainly engaged in the social division of labour as labour power only. They have been described as economically dependent on someone else ('too poor to farm'). Their daily subsistence struggle is based on a mix of charcoal, relief and remittances.   |

### 6.3.2 Class dynamics

One of the most ambitious questions that this chapter tries to answer is: how did it occur that some families in Lojom have been able to acquire more land, and possess more labour power, implements of production and head of cattle, whilst others have not been able to? To answer this question, the census data is triangulated with life-history interviews and family case studies (see, methodology in Chapter Two).

In the past, in Karamoja, men used to invest in family development by marrying as many women as possible, through bridewealth payments, with the final aim of increasing their social prestige, enlarging their family alliances and herding associations, and ultimately accumulating wealth (see Chapter Three). Presently in Lojom the investment strategies available to accumulate wealth are similar to those in the past, at least for the wealthier classes. However, following the process of 'de-pastoralisation', new avenues/spaces of accumulation are also becoming available to Lojom's residents, depending on the social class they belong to. While, according to Bernstein (2010: 22), the need for 'accumulation' responds to a capitalist organization of production, this thesis argues that 'accumulation' is actually embedded in the

traditional livestock economy, in which every Karamojong herder has always sought to accumulate enough wealth in cattle to provide the upkeep of at least three generations (see Chapter Three). Unlike agricultural societies in which the product (in harvest) had an exchange-value<sup>198</sup> but never a capacity for self-growth, in pastoral societies the product (in livestock) has always been an object of appropriation due to its natural capacity for self-growth.

In a place such as Lojom, what has changed from the past is that the traditional 'practices of accumulation' (cf. Bayarth, 1999) are now combined with those practices that feature a market economy. The Big Men of Iriiri and Lojom all have connections to the 'salaried economy'. The overall outcome is a relatively more permanent social polarization amongst the social classes and a higher dependence on casual labour. Family members of wealthier classes, for example, do not only provide mutual support and herding labour – as per tradition – but mainly provide labour power to work the land, keeping/acquiring land rights, and carrying out any other economic activity decided by the family male head to accumulate further wealth (see Chapter Seven). More specifically, large family alliances are exploited by Big Men from Lojom to implement both diverse economic activities and gain/maintain access to more garden rights through their wives' settlements in various villages.<sup>199</sup>

An additional feature of Lojom is that all of the actual or potential Big Men from the better off and middle classes are from the group of the original settlers who started to permanently inhabit the area of Iriiri, approximately around the time after the great famine of 1980. In their retelling of these historical events, they explained that upon their arrival, the early Bokora settlers in the area of Iriiri accessed a vast quantity of free land and survived through the assistance provided by missionaries and relief organizations. This assistance allowed them to survive until some groups of their men armed themselves around the mid-1980s, which enabled them to rebuild their herds mainly through armed raids conducted both in the region and against neighbouring groups (see both Chapters Three and Five). As a consequence of 'de-pastoralisation', which has entailed both 'livestock dispossession' and economic

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<sup>198</sup> In Meillassoux's view (1973), in traditional subsistence agricultural societies the product (in harvest) did not have any exchange-value until the rise of the market economy.

<sup>199</sup> Interview with case study number #9 (see Appendix I).

diversification based on the assistance provided by the WFP, NGOs and missionaries among others, the Bokora people adjusted to a new situation before any other Karamojong groups in the region. As has also been explained by Gray (2000), having left transhumant agro-pastoralism long ago, many Bokora embraced the opportunities provided by the national economy earlier on, such as access to formal education, and working for the government and NGOs. As I will illustrate in Chapter Nine, in Lojom both accumulation and subsistence were achieved also through the exploitation of the aid industry, whereby some families were able to access and gain benefit from the emerging power structures related to the aid industry in the region. Big Men in the great area of Iriiri (including Lojom) have also used these opportunities as 'routes back' to livestock keeping.

The life histories of current Big Men in Lojom show how they raided several head of cattle over time, and invested them in the expansion of their family and social ties, thus becoming the wealthiest and most powerful people in the village. As was shown in Chapter Five, family development and livestock keeping have historically been the two major investments and drivers of wealth accumulation. On one hand, family development was obtained by the male family heads through the marriage of multiple women, through which they gained access to a larger societal network, which ultimately gave them increased access to labour power. On the other hand, through increased access to labour, large families were able to work the land and, through its use, claim it as their own. The second major driver of wealth accumulation was obtained through restocking, which enabled both the clearance and ploughing of more fields with ox-ploughs, further extending large families' connections through traditional exchange strategies (see Chapters Five and Nine).

As illustrated in both pastoral and agrarian change literatures (Brockington, 2001; Little *et al.*, 2001; Homewood *et al.*, 2009; Bernstein, 2010; McCabe *et al.*, 2010), while wealthy families intentionally diversify their production to increase accumulation, poor families have no choice than to diversify their activities to secure their means of subsistence. Similarly, in Lojom, Adupinkal, who is the Big Man (*ekapolon*), migrated more than twenty years ago to the area of Iriiri when he was almost stockless. At that time, he survived through farming and slowly, mainly through armed raiding and animal exchanges, with his extended social network of kinships and friendships,



Adupinkal rebuilt his herds. Currently, he is both a leader in agricultural production in Lojom, and one of the largest livestock owners in the area (see Chapter Five). However, the current capacity of his family to produce large harvests is not an enabling factor for the accumulation of wealth, but rather it is important for feeding his extended family members, keeping them under his influence and commanding their labour.<sup>200</sup>

In conclusion, while in the past, in Iriiri, farming was a contributing factor combined with relief provided by missionaries and NGOs that helped those who were stockless survive, it was through different practices of accumulation that families uplifted themselves from their neediest states, in the difficult years of the 1980s. In the short term, from the mid-1980s – and up until the disarmament in early 2000s – through armed raiding, some Bokora families were able to massively rebuild their herds and invest them for their family development. In the long term, they rebuilt their herds by accessing, before any other group, the opportunities provided by the national economy, getting jobs in formal power structures, through which some were able to restock their animals. Recently, in Lojom, accumulation has been possible through farming only for very few families, during the rare ‘good years’ such as 2010 and 2011. Certainly in 2013 – and perhaps also in 2014 and in 2015, given the overall low production in the area – farming in Lojom was neither a driver to accumulate wealth nor was it an adequate source of subsistence for the majority of the families living in the village.

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<sup>200</sup> Interview with case study number #1 (see Appendix).

## Conclusion

This chapter has illustrated how the better off class in Lojom owns more plots of land in different areas, has control over more units of labour power – in the form of both family and wage labour – and owns (or has access to) a variety of different implements of production, such as tractors, oxen and ploughs. This favourable combination of means of production has resulted in this class being able to cultivate more acres of land and obtain higher agricultural production. In fact, the harvest of the better off class in a rare ‘good year’ is sufficient to support significant commercialization and the accumulation of profit.

Depending on their own capacity to provide enough food for their family members, men both control and have rights over their family members’ labour. Leadership is attained through a creation of ‘followership’ (cf. Vincent, 1978: 187). On the other hand, poor families tend to break up into smaller mono-nuclear units, and members often migrate elsewhere looking for more secure living conditions. Therefore, in Lojom, the ideal of every male head is to provide enough food for his extended family to the point that he attracts and retains within the original family as many members as possible. In order to do so, he needs to have access to enough land and various implements to increase land productivity. Once food production is relatively good for the family’s subsistence, male heads’ investments are diverted and differentiated into other more remunerative economic activities to make individual gains (see Chapter Seven).

The final aim of men is to create a family that is as extended as possible, as per tradition, to both acquire social prestige as well as have control over the greatest quantity of labour power as possible. Family labour surplus is then invested into any type of economic activity that is not necessarily attached to agricultural production. In this way, the exploitation of the agricultural production is indirectly related to the accumulation of wealth, through the exploitation of family labour in any profitable activity. Whitehead (2006) describes a similar phenomenon in her longitudinal study in rural Ghana:

[...] a virtuous circle between wealth and household labour supply and a vicious circle between poverty and small household size and poverty traps

existed so that those with too little labour and too little wealth engaged in strategies which entrenched them in poverty. (Whitehead, 2006: 278)

In summary, in order to understand the different levels of agricultural production across classes, the diverse control and rights over land tenure, labour power and type of implements of production are crucial factors to consider. The first Bokora settlers in the area of Iriiri accessed a vast quantity of free land and survived through a combination of farming and other economic activities (missionary work and relief aid), until they armed themselves in the mid-1980s and rebuilt their herds mainly through armed raiding (see Chapter Three). Those who raided more head of cattle invested some of them in the expansion of their families and social networks, thus becoming the wealthiest families. Currently, agricultural production in Lojom is a source of wealth and profit only for the wealthier classes and only in those rare good harvest years. In most harvest years, however, agriculture is neither a driver to accumulate further wealth, nor an adequate source of subsistence for the majority of the families in poorer classes. In the next chapter, I will show the importance of off-farm activities to complement the chronically low agricultural production in Lojom.

## **7. Off-farm Activities and Migration**

## **Introduction**

This chapter will analyse the dynamics between Iriiri and Lojom in relation to processes of social differentiation and class formation that are present among families living in Lojom.

Due to few livestock holdings (Chapter Five) and low agricultural production (Chapter Six), to try to supplement scarcity, many families in Lojom have moved into 'off-farm' activities or 'diversification of incomes' (cf. Peters, 2004). Small and growing towns such as Iriiri represent important economic opportunities for dispossessed families (Fratkin and Smith, 2005), where men and women from nearby villages trade labour power and natural resources in different ways. This has resulted in the villages surrounding Iriiri becoming increasingly integrated in the market economy as commodity producers, and in the local landscape of the entire area becoming both economically and socially highly integrated.

This chapter aims to investigate to what extent access to more urban settings, in the form of access to casual labour and 'off-farm' activities, contributes to the current socio-economic differentiation among the people living in Lojom. This chapter argues that the wealthiest classes have been able to establish both rural and urban homes, which foster wealth accumulation, while poorer classes cannot afford to live in town and merely travel there on a daily basis to sell their labour power and products, as a way to survive.

## 7.1 Off-Farm Activities

### 7.1.1 Iriiri Trading Centre

Iriiri is a typical 'road town' (cf. Fratkin, 2004), it is the major urban centre of the sub-county to which it gives its name, and it is also a parish in its own right. In 2013, the centre was populated by 2,019 individuals only.<sup>201</sup> Despite the relatively low number of residents, Iriiri is a busy centre that is economically active with shops and markets, cut into two parts by a major road that is constantly traversed by trucks, buses and cars travelling between the Teso region and the rest of Karamoja. For the people living in the area, the constant transit makes the centre an ideal place for exchanging products and labour, to the extent that many have been attracted to move to Iriiri due to its trading possibilities.

Prior to the beginning of the forced disarmament programme of 2006, due to the high levels of insecurity resulting from cattle raiding and road ambushes, the whole of Karamoja was rarely visited by outsiders, with the exception of missionaries, aid workers and government officials. In the early 2000s, other than two public buses a day (one from Mbale and one from Kampala), only a few other vehicles could be seen passing through Iriiri centre each day.<sup>202</sup> The isolation of Iriiri was symptomatic of the overall insecurity in the region, as well as of the particular features of the place. As described in Chapter Three, the border position of Iriiri made the area highly insecure, with frequent raiding conducted by the Karimojong at the expense of the Iteso,<sup>203</sup> and subsequent responses carried out by the army or local militia, which further exacerbated the clashes and insecurity. While in the recent past Iriiri was well-known in the region for its violence and insecurity, it is presently a secure place where both businessmen from outside the region and local people access trading and casual labour opportunities, as well as food relief, religious masses and health care services.

As Fratkin (2004) has pointed out, similarly, in Kenya, another pastoral group (Ariaal) that has faced several economic changes,

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<sup>201</sup> Population estimates collected by the sub-county Office in Iriiri in 2013. The parish of Iriiri is divided into villages and the population of 2,019 refers to the so called village of Iriiri trading centre only.

<sup>202</sup> Interviews with both regional informant number #5 and local leader number #2 (see appendix I).

<sup>203</sup> The Iteso is the name of population living in Teso region.

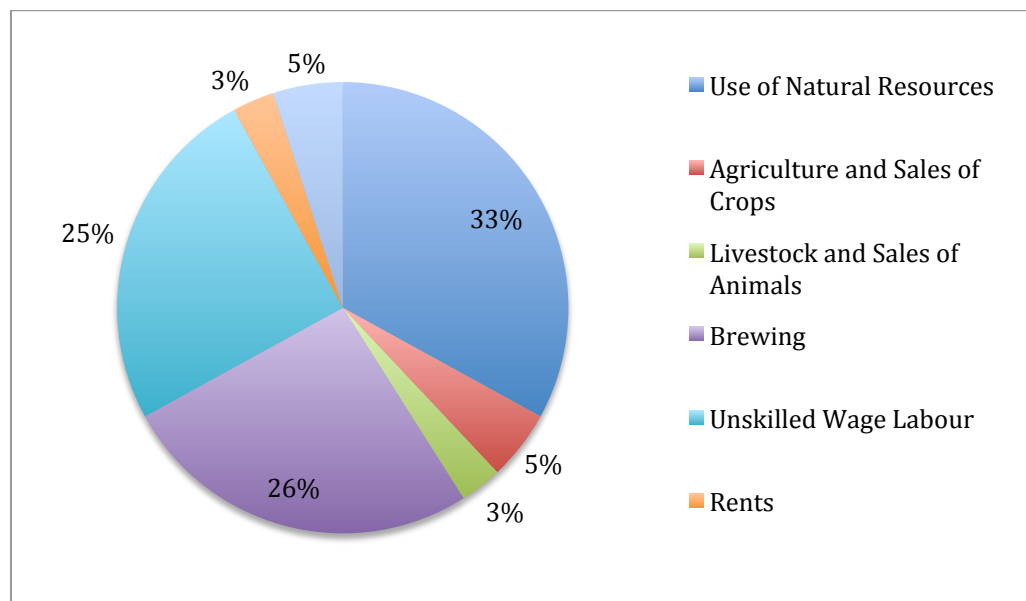
[...] see[s] the towns as one more resource to utilize, an essential alternative for poor households who have few animals, or an important centre to gain employment, sell livestock, seek health care, and obtain education for their children. (Fratkin, 2004: 126)

This new environment in Iriiri was brought about by a combination of different factors within the processes of ‘imposed peace’<sup>204</sup> and ‘livestock dispossession’ (see Chapter Five) that occurred in the region. The processes resulted in Iriiri’s main road becoming a sort of ‘open market’, providing important economic opportunities to many families living in the nearby area, in relatively isolated villages, to sell their agricultural produce, natural resources and products, as well as seek *leja-leja* opportunities. This pattern has thus resulted in a daily migration of people living in the surrounding villages to the trading centre. As a result of this, the local economic landscape covering the area between Iriiri centre and the adjacent villages is, both economically and socially, very well integrated.

In Lojom, women commute almost every day to Iriiri centre, a one-hour walk, to sell bundles of firewood, sacks of charcoal, or cups of local beer, buying salt, sugar and cooking oil, which are items they cannot produce themselves. In general, for the people living in Lojom, Wednesday and Sunday are the two major days to go to Iriiri. Wednesday is the official market day as well as the cattle market day, making the trading centre full of people from the nearby villages and other districts and sub-counties, such as Katakwy, Moroto, Mathany, and Kangole. The amount of people spending the day in Iriiri on Sunday due to religious mass has turned Sunday into another market day as well. Figure 9.1 shows the importance of off-farm activities as a fundamental source of income for the people living in Lojom.

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<sup>204</sup> A situation that started to improve in 2006 and reached its end towards the beginning of 2010.

**Figure 9.1: Primary source of income in Lojom**

Source: Author's census survey

As shown in the previous chapters, the beginning of the disarmament process in the early 2000s, caused an increase in the loss of animals for many herders in Lojom (see Chapter Five), making the sale of animals a small portion (3%) of the total income of families. Presently, given the high number of stockless families and the overall low crop production and commercialization (5%), many families have an urgent need for cash to buy food to secure their subsistence. This material condition makes most families in Lojom dependent on trading natural resource products such as charcoal and firewood (33%), unskilled casual labour (25%), provided to both businessmen from outside the region and a few employers living in the town of Iriiri. The commercialization of beer (26%) is another fundamental activity for many. As discussed in the previous chapters, some families in Lojom also receive financial remittances from relatives who either still live in central Karamoja, or have migrated outside the region and live in cities such as Busia, in eastern Uganda.<sup>205</sup>

Similar results have been reported across the entire Karamoja region, whereby, according to the largest household survey ever conducted in Karamoja by the International Organization for Migration (IOM),<sup>206</sup> in 2010, the activities that in the

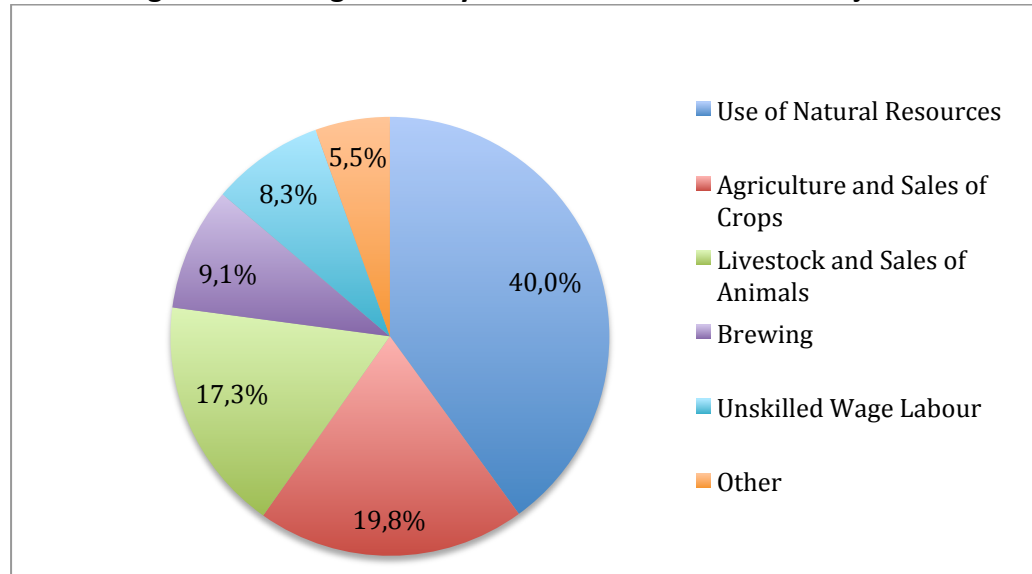
<sup>205</sup> Unfortunately, estimates do not include the amount of financial remittances.

<sup>206</sup> Between January and February 2010, the IOM conducted a Community Based Targeting exercise in all villages within Karamoja on behalf of the WFP. The exercise involved surveying approximately 73,000 households and nearly 1,300 villages (see, Chapter Two for the IOM/WFP definition of family).



past used to supplement the Karamojong economy (Dyson-Hudson, 1960), such as the sale of natural resources and agricultural produce, have now become fundamental to their survival (Figure 9.2).<sup>207</sup>

**Figure 9.2: Village Primary Source of Income in Karamoja**



Source: IOM, 2010

The major difference between Lojom and the regional data from the IOM survey is the livestock sale that is particularly affected in Lojom by the high number of stockless families (66 out of 99 families are stockless). The overall income earned from the sale of agricultural produce is also particularly low in Lojom, considering that the area of Iriiri is one of the most fertile places in Karamoja. This finding was partly explained in Chapter Five already, as 2013, the year my study was conducted, was a year 'below-average' in terms of agricultural production, though even in 'good years' crop production appears to be an activity that, at best, is mainly for subsistence for most of the families in Lojom. Given the proximity of Iriiri to Lojom, many families end up commercializing beer, natural resources and doing *leja-leja* rather than cultivating their own land (see Chapter Seven).

### 7.1.2 Beer as the 'cattle of women'

Presently, in Iriiri centre and neighbouring villages, there is high production and consumption of alcoholic beverages such as the *kweete*, *kutu kutu* and *etulè*. *Kweete* is

<sup>207</sup> Figure 9.2 shows the primary source of survival only in terms of income. Therefore, many families have sought to diversify their livelihood into an array of compensatory work activities.

a local brew made with a mix of maize, sorghum and cassava, and it is the most common alcoholic beverage in the area. *Kutu kutu* is mainly made with sorghum, and *etulè* is a strong spirit (or distillate) that has become illegal over time and is currently difficult to find in the greater area of Iriiri.<sup>208</sup> The preparation of *kweete* requires the use of different crops, bundles of firewood, and jerry cans of water. The work of making the beverage, mixing the crops with water and cooking them in a large sauce pan for hours, is conducted solely by women (see photo below).

**Photo 3: Preparation of *kweete* in Iriiri centre**



Source: Author's photo, 2014

While traditionally local beer was only prepared during official ceremonies and described as the 'the cattle of women' (Dyson-Hudson, 1966: 96), currently, the sale of beer is one of the most profitable activities available to families living in Iriiri and nearby villages, especially for women.<sup>209</sup> More specifically, what has changed from the past is the function of beer as an item with exclusive important cultural and exchange-gift value, to an item that is also becoming a commodity for commercialization (Mkutu, 2008; Dancause *et al.*, 2010). In addition, the production of *kweete* in Lojom has other

<sup>208</sup> There are many other local alcoholic beverages such as the *Marua*, *Lokerier*, *Magi Moto*, *Etorotor* and *Loketiet*. In the North of the region, for example, in places such as Kaabong, the major local brew is the *Eboutila*, which is not produced in Iriiri.

<sup>209</sup> The rising importance of beer as an important economic activity is also shown in other parts of the region, and in the local language 'income generating activity' is named *akidoldol*.

purposes as well. For example, it is offered by landowners' wives to members of farmers groups who work in gardens as a sign of appreciation for their day of work (see Chapter Six). Other studies have found that beer, instead of money or food, is also used to pay for casual labour:

Typically, farm labourers are paid in *quete* [equal to *kweete*] (local brew) and better off families have greater access to this commodity, being able to convert some of their crop surplus into liquid assets. (Burns *et al.*, 2013: 30)

In Lojom, most families are beer producing families, with the preparation carried out in the majority of cases by women (84.9%). Therefore, regardless of the different social classes women belong to, the production of beer in Lojom is common in most families. While Table 18 below shows the importance of the commercialization of beer for many families living in Lojom to make a living, averaging 26 per cent of the total family income, as will be clearer in the next section, this activity also partly explains the causes of social differentiation.

**Table 18: Beer commercialization and social classes**

| Social Classes              | % of families who commercialized | beer income on total income<br>In % |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Better off<br/>(N=4)</b> | 100                              | 17.9                                |
| <b>Middle<br/>(N=13)</b>    | 69.2                             | 25.1                                |
| <b>Poor<br/>(N=56)</b>      | 73.2                             | 24.6                                |
| <b>Very Poor<br/>(N=26)</b> | 73.1                             | 30.8                                |

Source: Author's census survey

For now, Table 18 illustrates how, regardless of the wealth of families, women produce and trade beer for their own subsistence and their children. This finding is in line with other studies conducted in Karamoja, whereby:

In all three homestead clusters, selling beer was identified as the best way for women to earn money, and even women from the wealthiest households relied on selling beer for their daily subsistence. As one woman observed when asked if life would be easier if her husband were rich: "It's all the same, especially in these hard times: wives of men with or without cattle sell beer". (Dancause *et al.*, 2010: 1126)

The important finding highlighted by Dancause *et al.*, (2010), is that, regardless of the social class women belong to, their occupations in the social division of labour fundamentally remain the same. On the other hand, in the following chapters, I will show the ways in which men in Lojom are able to radically change their occupations as they become richer.

Aside from opportunities for commercialization, the high levels of involvement in the production of beer in Lojom is also explained by cultural-nutrition phenomena. Beer is one of the most important foods consumed by the Karamojong in terms of kilocalories (Dancause *et al.*, 2010), with every family producing some for their own consumption. Young children are also fed with beer to overcome periods of hunger, and residents of Lojom often explain that children sleep well after drinking beer because they do not feel hunger anymore.

Throughout the following description of the socio-economic phenomena inherent to beer production in Lojom, I will introduce brief case presentations which can help illustrate labour and economic production relations. Alice is a female-head of a family with two children who works in Iriiri as a cleaner for an NGO that provides her with a regular monthly salary. To earn extra income, every week on Wednesdays, the market day in Iriiri, Alice makes sure a large quantity of *kweete* is ready for sale. Due to the fact that she has a part-time job, she does not have time to cultivate land, and, in producing *kweete* she needs to buy the required crops to prepare the beer. In September 2013, with an initial capital of 41,200 UGX and seven part-time working days, Alice was able to make a profit of 15,000 UGX selling beer.<sup>210</sup> Below is a simple graph representing the typical economic strategy used by women such as Alice to increase their profits. Instead of buying crops, women will often also engage in *leja-leja*, earn food and use it to make beer.

1) Buy crops and other products → Make beer → Sell beer → Profit

Alice did not have issues with advancing the capital necessary to start her beer producing business, but the problem of having initial capital is a major one for most women who want to begin this profitable activity. In Iriiri, some women overcome this

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<sup>210</sup> See Appendix IV for the details.

issue by being part of the so called ‘village saving and loans association’, a sort of informal village bank, from which they borrow money every week to buy the required crops at the market to prepare the beer. In the next chapter I will discuss the importance of religious faith in being member of these savings groups.

Among the women from the better off class of Lojom (discussed in the previous chapters), the preparation of beer is done by using crops from their own production, thus solving both the issues with initial capital and the possibilities for achieving bigger profits. During times of small harvests, when crop prices at the market are higher, the selling of beer prepared by one’s own crop production makes an important difference in terms of overall profits.<sup>211</sup> When crop prices are lower, even without their own production, women are also generally able to achieve good profits.

Women in Lojom go to Iriiri to sell the beer and they use the profit to buy food at the market and medication when needed, and to pay for school fees for their own children. In Lojom, there is also a high level of solidarity among women, for instance, when someone is in need of money, a friend helps by preparing some *kweete* and selling it at the market on behalf of the person who is in need.

Male heads of a polygynous family<sup>212</sup> often see the production of beer as a way for each of their wives with their respective children to become an independent unit<sup>213</sup> – meaning that the male family heads will not need to spend their own money or use their own resources to maintain all of their wives and children (extended family). Keem, for instance, owns three houses in Iriiri and one in the Naloret village (a one hour walk from Iriiri centre). In Iriiri, he owns a bar where he sells beer and soda, and he manages the business with his brother and cousins. He is married, with three wives; the first wife is Cici, she stays in the village and can be considered the most ‘traditional’, given the way she dresses and the fact that she was paid with full bridewealth. In terms of her work status, she makes a living through selling corn seed and making other small profits through the management of the grinding mill in the village, which is owned by Keem. The second wife is Mokura and she manages the house in ‘town warrior’,<sup>214</sup> another village next to Iriiri, where she produces and sells local beer. The

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<sup>211</sup> Interview with local leader number #2 (see Appendix I).

<sup>212</sup> In Lojom, not all male heads of polygynous families are ‘Big Men’.

<sup>213</sup> In Chapter Ten, I introduce the concept of ‘sub-family unit’ defined as one wife plus children.

<sup>214</sup> ‘Town warrior’ is the name of a village on the outskirts of Iriiri centre.

third wife is Abura and she manages the house in 'go down', a major road on the outskirts of Iriiri centre, where there is a small shop where she sells local beer. In a rotational manner, all of Keem's wives work at his bar in Iriiri, by preparing food and serving drinks to the costumers. In Keem's family, different economic activities have thus been distributed across the three wives so that they are not a 'cost' to him. His three wives are economically responsible for themselves and exercise some control over the profit generated from the commercialization of beer and the use of the grinding mill, specifically, the part that is necessary to guarantee the survival of themselves and their own children. Any extra profits they make, especially if they are generated from the grinding mill, are given directly to Keem. In addition, unpaid labour is provided for Keem's own activities, so that part of his wives' work is regularly appropriated by him.

The commercialization of beer to some extent contributes to wives' subsistence and financial independence. According to Dancause *et al.*, (2010) since most beer customers in Karamoja are men, while women prepare and sell the beer, drinking and brewing are actually activities that help redistribute income from men to women.<sup>215</sup>

### 7.1.3 Four case studies: women and brewing in Lojom

#### Case Study I: Lokwii<sup>216</sup>

Lokwii is one of the four wives of Adupinkal, a Big Man from Lojom, who belongs to the class of the better off. This is her own description of her situation:

'When I brew, my children survive with some good food and also I am able to meet other family expenses, such as school items, like buying books and pens, and medical expenses. I also reinvest the money and profit generated from the local brew to buy more sorghum/maize, which, again, is fermented to support further local brewing. The major challenge for me in brewing is when I have to give credit to the members of the community for the beer consumed. I am still poor despite the fact that my husband is rich simply because his assets, for instance the animals, are his personal ones, so I do not have any access and say over his properties. Besides animals, he also owns land, one motorcycle, one bicycle and ox ploughs, and I have no right to use these assets without his permission simply because he paid *ekicul* for me. Although my husband has a lot of land, which is able to support agricultural practices, the harvest is less in

<sup>215</sup> Certainly, men constitute the majority of buyers. However in terms of beer consumption there is no major difference between men and women.

<sup>216</sup> Interview with group discussion number #12 (see Appendix I).

certain seasons, and even the oxen is first of all taken by the younger wives, so this delays me in land preparation for early planting, as the oxen is brought late to my garden, and this makes me poorer'.<sup>217</sup>

### Case Study II: Nachugae<sup>218</sup>

Nachugae is one of the seven wives of Ewapet, another Big Man of Lojom, who belongs to the class of the better off. She also describes her situation:

'I always brew local beer, then I sell the produce and I use the money to buy family necessities, mostly food, but also salt, mud small fish [locally known as *omena*] and beans among others, and this is because when you sit without doing any productive activity nothing can be eaten in the family, as my husband might take long while he is visiting his other wives. The money from my local brew is for my personal family<sup>219</sup> use, for buying necessary food stuff and petty medical expenses, especially when the husband is in the other wives' homes. In fact, I cannot fully rely on my husband's help for the small family demands. Over reliance on the husband is stressful for me and that's why I take my personal initiatives of brewing to be more independent, except for the expensive medical costs which he has to support. The money I get from the local brew is also reinvested to buy sorghum or maize for more brewing. For a period I also had a small business when I was selling cooking oil, which I bought using the 50,000 UGX I got from local brewing. I think my husband is richer than me because he has his own animals and assets, like a grinding mill, which I cannot say are mine. He also owns land, ox-ploughs and a bicycle. I have only young children, who cannot really support me in other *akidoldol* [income earning activities] for the family, but if an older son was available, he could be the one who could help me in running the family. Here there is always drought, which affects our harvests, and this also makes me poor because agriculture is the dominant occupation for me in Lojom. I do local brewing, but the sorghum and maize crops are often affected by drought.'

### Case Study III: Lakawa<sup>220</sup>

Lakawa is one of the nine wives of Lonyangaluk, a Big Man living between Lojom and Iriiri, who belongs to the class of the better off. Lakawa describes her situation:

'Whenever I brew, the money generated is not taken by my husband because he does not even provide me with the necessary family help he is supposed to provide as my husband. He has ignored me, maybe because I do not cook for him. I use the income I get from local brew for buying more maize and sorghum

<sup>217</sup> What Lokwii means here is that the oxen is first given to her husband's younger wives and it is later brought to her, when the farming season of early rains has already passed, which leads to her delay in catching up with early rains.

<sup>218</sup> Interview with group discussion number #12 (see Appendix I).

<sup>219</sup> Meaning her own children.

<sup>220</sup> Interview with group discussion number #12 (see Appendix I).

to keep my brewing process going. Lonyangaluk as my husband is rich because he has animals in the kraal, and also his children are now older and engaged in different businesses in Iriiri and elsewhere, I do not know where exactly. He also owns land, which he has now given to most of his children and to some of his younger wives.'

#### **Case Study IV: Abura<sup>221</sup>**

Abura is one of the four wives of Lowalem, a potential future Big Man from Lojom, who presently belongs to the middle class. She describes her own situation:

'The money I earn from selling local brew remains with me, but I usually show the profit to my husband who advises on the way of spending it, like buying more maize or sorghum for making more money, and in case of a loss of cash in the local brew, he adds some more money for buying extra maize or sorghum. But part of the money from the local brew is used for family necessities like salt, *omena* and other petty medical expenses. Differently from me, my husband also owns animals, ox-ploughs and land. Recently he gave me 5 acres of land for my personal use. My husband's assets do not belong to me as the family is large, with 3 wives and children all staying in Lojom under his control [Lowalem]. I am still in a poor state because I lack personal assets, compared to my husband. Although he usually ploughs the land for me with his own oxen, due to the poor harvest caused by bad rains my harvest is really poor. I mainly rely on *leja-leja* instead of relying only on cultivation or only on waiting for the support from my husband. Also during times of good harvest I do not harvest enough for selling and the little I produce is to provide for the consumption of my family. My husband is rich because he is knowledgeable on how to really manage life in terms of planning and investing in small businesses, and also he is the family head who controls all the assets, both the movable and fixed ones.'

These four case studies are important in illustrating how the most profitable activities, assets and resources available in Lojom are owned, managed and controlled solely by men. This results in an inequality between men and women, both in terms of wealth and control over income and labour, which eventually makes male heads of families individually richer than the rest of their family members (see Chapter Ten). As already analysed in Chapter Six, male-heads of families – and especially those in polygynous families – are able to live beyond the limits of mere survival through their family members' unpaid work in their businesses and through supplementary property rights over economic assets and activities, the income of which they keep for their own personal gain.

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<sup>221</sup> Interview with group discussion number #12 (see Appendix I).



While the process of ‘de-pastoralisation’ has often turned women in Lojom into the primary providers of the family in terms of food production – regardless of their social class – men still retain control and rights over women’s labour. Therefore, the male family heads’ control over female labour in their own businesses leads to unequal and patriarchal social relationships (see in particular Chapter Ten).

There is an exception to this in female-headed families, which, in Lojom, are the minority of families across the different socio-economic classes, except for the middle class, which is composed by almost half by female-headed families, where women are not employed in their husbands’ activities as free labour force and therefore have full control over their labour power and income earned from *leja-leja* (see Chapter Ten).

#### **7.1.4 Charcoal and firewood**

As previously discussed, the recent improvement of security in the region, which includes the Iriiri sub-county, has brought in a variety of new economic opportunities, such as natural resource traders, building companies, extractive industries, tourism, and developmental interventions (for the latter see Chapter Nine). Over the years, following the process of ‘de-pastoralisation’, within a context of increased peace and unpredictable agricultural production, families have been seeking alternative means of social reproduction to secure their subsistence. This has resulted in socio-economic phenomena, such as the sale of labour power and the commercialization of beer, firewood and charcoal, which women primarily profit from, using the income to sustain the livelihood of the entire family.

Over the span of almost two decades,<sup>222</sup> the supply of charcoal has exponentially increased in Iriiri to the point that this production is currently one of the most important income generating activities (locally known as *akildoldol*) for the people living in the villages around Iriiri. In Lojom, as in many other villages in the area, most (71%) of the families are involved in burning charcoal and 18 per cent of families’ total income comes from the commercialization of charcoal, which is sold along the road that goes through Iriiri, up to the village of Alekilek, just before the historically highly contested Teso-Karamoja land border (Kandel, 2016).

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<sup>222</sup> For example, in 1996 in Iriiri, there was almost no supply of charcoal along the main road. Interview with regional informant number #10 (see Appendix I).

Aside from the improved security factor, the increase of charcoal production in Iriiri and Lojom also corresponds with the time in which local herders lost most of their livestock, in the beginning of the 2000s (see Chapter Five). In another study, which was partly conducted in Iriiri, a similar finding was also made, according to which ‘most people here [Iriiri] are living from charcoal. This has only been the case since the cows got finished’ (Scott-Villiers, 2012: 21).

Presently, in Iriiri, charcoal traders come from all over the country, even from as far as the capital Kampala. In addition, the demand for charcoal also comes from travellers, NGO and government workers who stop in Iriiri before leaving the region to buy sacks of charcoal, which are on average much cheaper compared to the rest of the country.<sup>223</sup> One full sack of charcoal (about 75 kg.) is sold in Iriiri, depending on the season, at a price between 18,000 UGX and 22,000 UGX, while in Kampala, the equivalent is sold at a price between 60,000 UGX and 70,000 UGX. Unsurprisingly, due to the high potential profit margin, at the expense of the local environment, sub-county authorities collect revenues (usually 5,000 UGX per sack) on the trade of charcoal.<sup>224</sup> The costs to the environment relate to charcoal production being an environmentally risky activity that requires cutting down many trees, in a region that has already lost many acres of green land over the years (Wilson, 1985). Overall, for any family, the production of charcoal is a low capital and high labour intensive activity, in which there is cooperation between male and female labour. Usually, most men from Lojom walk to Mount Napak looking for trees to cut down and go back to the village to burn the wood. Once the preparation of charcoal is completed, women transport the sacks from the village to the town centre and sell it.

In terms of strategies to secure their means of subsistence, many women in Lojom use the profit they made from the commercialization of charcoal to buy crops at the market to make *kweete*, which requires an initial capital, and this happens especially if families did not produce enough crop from their own production. Below is a chart of a typical strategy of subsistence:

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<sup>223</sup> There is a law according to which, whenever charcoal is transported outside the region, particular taxes have to be paid to the sub-county.

<sup>224</sup> Interestingly, many NGO personnel working in Karamoja on environmental conservation buy large quantity of charcoal in the region.

1) Cut trees down → Make charcoal → Sell charcoal → Buy food → Make beer → Sell beer → Profit

This type of strategy efficiently exploits the local potential for the commercialization of charcoal and beer, at the expense of both the local environment and agricultural production. The market's incentives to focus production on the trading of natural resources has reduced the investments (time and units of labour) spent by each family to grow their own food, thus diminishing the overall family agricultural production.<sup>225</sup> Given the low yield in agriculture, this strategy is completely justified. Similarly, these strategies are also conducted by women living in other parts of Karamoja, as shown by another study conducted by Scott-Villiers (2012) and her team, according to which: 'If women make charcoal, sell it, buy grain, make beer, sell it, and buy food for their family, they are being strategic to increase the little that they have' (Scott-Villiers, 2012: 45).

In Lojom, while the commercialization of beer cuts across all families regardless of their social class, the production of charcoal is mostly concentrated among the poor and very poor families, and their income significantly relies on it; overall, 18 per cent of the total income is earned in poor and very poor families through the commercialization of charcoal (see Table 19).

**Table 19: Charcoal commercialization and social classes**

| Social Classes              | % of families who commercialized | % charcoal income on total income |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Better off<br/>(N=4)</b> | 25%                              | 2                                 |
| <b>Middle<br/>(N=13)</b>    | 53.8%                            | 12                                |
| <b>Poor<br/>(N=56)</b>      | 75%                              | 19                                |
| <b>Very Poor<br/>(N=26)</b> | 80.8%                            | 20                                |

Source: Author's census survey

Other than production of charcoal, trading of firewood is another economic activity also undertaken by poor people, especially women. Most families in Lojom sell firewood (70%), the majority of whom are women (67.1%). In this case, every morning,

<sup>225</sup> Interview with local leader number #2 (see appendix I).

women walk towards Mount Napak to collect bundles of firewood and sell it in Iriiri. The collection of firewood is also done for families' own consumption, for instance, every morning school children bring bundles of firewood to prepare the food delivered by the WFP under the school meals programme.

As we have seen, in Lojom the commercialization of local beer, charcoal and firewood are essential economic activities, especially for the people who belong to the poor and very poor social classes, and they are fundamental activities for most of the women, regardless of their class. However, all these off-farm activities are barely enough to compensate for the low and erratic agricultural production and the loss of animals. In addition, except for the production of charcoal, which is an activity shared between men and women, most of the other off-farm activities are carried out by women only, thus resulting in their overburdened work load. In terms of subsistence, through these activities, women are somewhat economically independent from their husbands, but they are not independent in terms of surplus, as all the profits are controlled by their husbands, which reproduces their social and material condition over time.

## 7.2 Migration

### 7.2.1 Daily employment opportunities (*leja-leja*)

In Lojom, after the sale of natural resources and local beer, the third most important activity in terms of income is the sale of labour power. The local *Ngakaramojong* term *leja-leja* includes all the types of unskilled daily wage labour activities, such as farm labour, construction work, and any type of casual labour carried out in exchange for money or food. The local government, UN agencies and NGOs' food-for-work or cash-for-work employment activities are also usually referred to as *leja-leja*.

Lojom supplies many people to the local labour market, mainly as farm labour. Employment opportunities strongly link Lojom with Iriiri, with people from Lojom going to Iriiri to find work opportunities as construction workers or any type of casual labourer, or as casual farmers in gardens. All families (96%) have at least one family member that works as a *leja-leja*, the majority of which are women (79%) (See Chapter Six).

While most families living in Lojom have at least one family member that sells his/her labour, what differs in each social class, is the total income earned from the sale of labour (see Table 20).

**Table 20: Social classes and *leja-leja***

| Social Classes                    | % <i>leja-leja</i> income on total income | % men only working as a <i>leja-leja</i> <sup>226</sup> |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Better off</b><br><b>(N=4)</b> | 7   | 0   |
| <b>Middle</b><br><b>(N=13)</b>    | 33  | 7.7   |
| <b>Poor</b><br><b>(N=56)</b>      | 25  | 5.4   |
| <b>Very Poor</b><br><b>(N=26)</b> | 23  | 19.2  |

Source: Author's census survey

The better off class has the lowest income earned from the sale of labour because this class hires people from the poorer classes within Lojom and outside the village. By contrast, the middle class has the highest percentage of income from the sale of labour because half of this class is formed by female-headed families, the

<sup>226</sup> Farm activities only.

category of people mostly involved in farm labour activities, which is the highest type of *leja-leja* activity in Lojom. In terms of men, nobody in the better off class and only 7.4 per cent in the middle class undertake *leja-leja*, while in the poor class, nearly half (48%) of the men participate in the work, together with the women.<sup>227</sup> This is a sign that even though *leja-leja* is still a stigma for men in Karamoja, especially when related to cultivation, amongst the poorer classes, men are changing major aspects of their identity out of necessity.

After having exhausted free labour from their own extended families, businessmen from outside Karamoja or from other parts of the region, and male heads from the better off and middle classes living in Iriiri and in the surrounding villages — hire mostly women, and an increasing number of men, from the poor and very poor classes, for farm and non-farm activities,<sup>228</sup> at the cost of 3.000 UGX per day, usually from the hours of 7-8 am to 1 pm. For the daily workers, salaries are not negotiable, therefore, those who undertake *leja-leja* do not command wages and have no bargaining power. The rule of ‘first come first serve’ usually applies since everyone is replaceable with somebody else, and workers usually arrive early in the morning to secure their day’s employment in an environment of fierce competition. Recently, Chinese companies that are building roads in Karamoja rely on Karamojong labour for low/simple tasks, whereas they tend to import Chinese workers for higher skilled labour. In particular, people travel from Napak district for daily labour opportunities in the Moroto infrastructure sector. The level of engagement in *leja-leja* activities is so high that until 2 pm villages in Karamoja are completely deserted, with everyone occupied in some sort of activity to try and sustain his or her family’s livelihood.<sup>229</sup>

With their sale of labour, women undertake similar strategies for subsistence as with charcoal:

- 1) *Leja-leja* → Money → Buy crops → Make beer → Sell beer → Profit

<sup>227</sup> This explains the low percentage of men only (5.4%) among this class.

<sup>228</sup> See Chapter Seven for non-farm activities.

<sup>229</sup> A similar finding was collected by another PhD researcher in Karamoja in the area of Moroto and Tapac.

Alternatively, if labour is paid with food, either by landowners or NGOs, depending on the type of cereals provided, women may use it directly to prepare beer, or sell it to then buy the necessary cereals to make beer. For instance, in Lojom, people report they do not like cereals provided by the WFP to make the *kweete* and the relief is often sold at the market in exchange for money.<sup>230</sup>

2) *Leja-leja* → Food → Sell Food → Buy crops → Make beer → Sell beer → Profit

One of the consequences of the growing importance of *leja-leja* for securing subsistence is the reduced time spent by each family growing their own food. This diminishes the overall family agricultural production and increases market dependency, both in terms of job opportunities and in terms of access to food.<sup>231</sup> In sum, the increase in *leja-leja* as one of the major means to sustain families' livelihoods has resulted in family agricultural production being farther from meeting local food requirements, with the high risk that in the near future, food will, for the most part, only be accessible in markets.

### 7.2.2 Migration and remittances

Over the past decade, due to insecurity and 'livestock dispossession', for the Bokora population, migration has been a major response for their reproduction, to the extent that they were among the first Karamojong groups who, following the beginning of the disarmament of 2001, migrated to Kampala in large numbers (Stites *et al.*, 2007b; Sundal, 2010). Still nowadays, in Kampala, at the roundabout between Jinja and Kampala road, most beggars are women with their children who come from Karamoja, especially from the Bokora section, from areas such as the Mathany and Kangole sub-counties.

Lojom is a place of relatively recent migration. In fact, more than half of the population was born elsewhere, and unsurprisingly, most of the families retain

<sup>230</sup> At the time when I used to work for the WFP this was a recurrent complaint from the beneficiaries also in Kaabong, Moroto and Nakapiripirit districts.

<sup>231</sup> Interview with regional informant number #12 (see Appendix I).

important connections with different places, mainly in central Karamoja.<sup>232</sup> At the same time, the history of the Bokora as one of the first Karamojong groups to migrate within and outside the Karamoja region has resulted in the people of Lojom having wide and unexpected family connections across the country;

Other studies (Stites *et al.*, 2007b; Gackle *et al.*, 2007) have shown that, of the three Karimojong sub-sections, the Bokora (Napak District) have the stronger record of migration to the main urban centres. (Sundal, 2010: 75)

The Karamojong presence outside the Karamoja region is not limited to Kampala. In fact, there are many Karamojong living in other major cities, particularly in the eastern part of the country, such as Mbale, Busia and Soroti (Jinja and Iganga).<sup>233</sup> Despite the high level of racism and discrimination perpetuated by Ugandans against all the Karamojong (see Chapter Nine), there are still strong incentives for the Karamojong to migrate outside the region. Depending on the social class, reasons for migrating highly differ between poorer and wealthier classes. While people from the poor and very poor classes mainly migrate to beg in towns and for seasonal labour, people in wealthier classes migrate for more permanent jobs and formal education, especially at higher levels (boarding and high schools).

In Lojom, 12 per cent of the people who were born there have already left, and 37 per cent of all families have at least one close family member who has out-migrated from Karamoja. The main reason why they left was to work as casual labourers (38%), the second was to graze animals (19%), and the third was a consequence of the loss of animals (19%). Interestingly, in the survey I conducted, insecurity was selected as a cause for migration by only 16 per cent of respondents, due to the completion of the disarmament exercise in 2011.

In time, this sort of Karamojong 'diaspora' (or displacement) which occurred over the past decade, especially after the beginning of the 2001 disarmament, caused those who remained in the region to generate a wide family network of relatives living in different towns across the country, with many poor and very poor families living in Lojom relying on financial remittances from relatives for their livelihood (see Table 21).

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<sup>232</sup> Precisely from the sub-counties of Mathany, Kangole, Lopei and Lotome.

<sup>233</sup> Dodoth, Jie and Labwar groups migrate for seasonal labour into other towns such as Kitgum, Gulu, Lira and others.



**Table 21: Social classes and financial remittances<sup>234</sup>**

| Social Classes                    | Percentage of families receiving remittances |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Better off</b><br><b>(N=4)</b> | 0  |
| <b>Middle</b><br><b>(N=13)</b>    | 23   |
| <b>Poor</b><br><b>(N=56)</b>      | 16   |
| <b>Very Poor</b><br><b>(N=26)</b> | 50   |

Source: Author's census survey

While families in the better off class support family members living elsewhere, half of the families in the very poor class are beneficiaries of remittances. Overall, 25 per cent of all families in Lojom receive financial remittances, mainly from relatives (88.5%), whereas few families (11.5%) receive remittances from friends. The majority of those who send remittances (64%) to families in Lojom live outside Karamoja, half of which (50%) live in the town of Busia, on the border with Kenya.

This finding shows the relatively strong level of solidarity towards the most vulnerable families, and the importance of family connections outside the region, especially for the class of the very poor. The fact that 12 per cent of people who were born in Lojom have left the town, suggests that this connection will continue in the near future as well. The patterns of out-migrations from Karamoja are thus important in the medium run to create a network of people who are able to care for the most vulnerable families in the region.

### **7.2.3 'Towns are the new kraals'**

Throughout the Karamoja region, when comparing towns to villages, people living in these two places often present important differences, especially in terms of the type of labour they perform, the level of formal education they attained, and the wealth status they have. However, on a closer look, the dichotomy between urban and rural is often broken down by intra-households dynamics and large family connections (see Chapter Ten).

<sup>234</sup> Unfortunately, estimates do not include the amount of financial remittances on the total income.

Double residences in Iriiri and Lojom are an investment for wealth/capital accumulation, that goes beyond simple reproduction, especially for men. More specifically, once simple family reproduction is guaranteed through a combination of women's farming and off-farming work in the villages, men are 'free' to seek surplus in town. By contrast, previous studies have not recognized this as a strategy for wealth accumulation, and have only pointed out the cost involved in such a livelihood strategy. For example, Stites (*et al.*, 2012) have found that:

Keeping one foot in the town is also viewed as insurance against increased insecurity. A woman in Moroto explained that she preferred to be in both the village and town because in the village "something can go wrong, so I may need to take refuge in town". This bifurcated existence is more costly and requires social capital and proximity in order to maintain the linkages in both locations. (Stites *et al.*, 2012: 20)

Conversely, this chapter argues that rather than a cost *per se*, the double residence is an investment strategy as it is actually a way to increase wealth, especially for men of both the better off and middle classes. The dynamics of town versus village highlight both the separation of classes across locations, as well as within intra-household dynamics. As Wright (2005: 16) has pointed out, there are 'concrete ways in which rights and powers over economic resources and activities are distributed across locations within relations.'

In Lojom, all the better off families, for instance, have built at least one permanent or semi-permanent house in Iriiri and male heads of families from this class reside in Iriiri, while most of their children and wives stay in the village. Specifically, Adupinkal, Lonyangaluk and Lokwaakou all reside in town most of the time, whereas their wives are based in Lojom. Overall, across the entire sample I surveyed, there is a strong correlation between wealth and owning a house in town (see Table 22).

**Table 22: Social classes and houses in Iriiri centre**

| Social Classes      | Percentage of families owning house in Iriiri |
|---------------------|---|
| Better off<br>(N=4) | 100   |
| Middle<br>(N=13)    | 23.1  |
| Poor<br>(N=56)      | 8.9   |
| Very Poor<br>(N=26) | 3.8   |

Source: Author's census survey

This pattern is also observable in villages other than Lojom, where wealthier male heads of families (Big Men) also own a home in Iriiri and reside full-time or part-time in the town.

The wealthiest male heads of families (Big Men) live in Iriiri mostly for business opportunities, exposure and networking. In their view, living in Iriiri is more interesting than Lojom because they can consume different items, meet people of the same or higher social standing and drink together, while discussing relevant issues. By contrast, they see the village of Lojom as the place of agricultural production and preparation of products to sell in town, and the place where the family (especially wives and children) remain more permanently. While traditionally herds and herders had always been together, we can now see male heads of polygynous families, belonging to the better off and middle classes especially, having detached their residences from the place of production. This is a trend that is captured in other pastoral areas as well, where migrant labour in urban areas keeps the family in the rural area as a base while income is earned in the towns (Brockington, 2001: 323).

According to Elia – a well known elder living in the village of Alekilek, a resettlement village located on the main road, a few kilometres from Iriiri centre, towards the border with Teso – the way men perceive the current life in towns is similar to what life was like in the kraals, as if ‘towns are the new kraals’. The place for business is the town, and male heads of families living in Iriiri have this particular purpose in mind. Though men spend some time in the village to be with their families and to check on agricultural production and their assets, it is not uncommon to see only elderly people, women and children in the villages, especially during the day.

The ways in which poor families and wealthy families are associated to Iriiri is highly different. For the classes of the poor and very poor in Lojom, livelihoods greatly depend on the relationship with Iriiri, and Iriiri is an important economic resource to earn a living, to which they go to for specific purposes, such as to trade natural resources, exchange products and sell their labour in the market as a *leja-leja*. Almost all poor families do not own houses in Iriiri and mostly live in Lojom. Work opportunities for poor families from the nearby villages are available due to the fact that Big Men stay in Iriiri and often need labour power for construction, off-loading trucks, cleaning their compounds and so on. Lokorondo, for example, a poor and

relatively young man living in Iriiri, is constantly employed as a casual labourer for different purposes, such as cleaning the compound of the parish or NGO and loading trucks with charcoal.

When looking at the different gender roles across the different social classes, we can find that among the wealthiest families, it is men who stay in Iriiri, whereas among poor and very poor families it is women who are associated with the centre. For instance, besides the animal market that takes place in Iriiri every Wednesday, which is attended by men only (rarely from Lojom), in general, off-farm activities along the road of Iriiri are conducted mainly by women, with regards to both the production and sale of natural products and labour.

As we have seen, poor and very poor women living in Lojom currently appear to be more mobile than men of the same social standing. While women of poorer classes potentially have more exposure to the town than the men in the same social class, the activities the women undertake do not allow them to 'interact' with the town in the same way that wealthier men do, accumulating wealth and overcoming their difficult conditions. While for the wealthiest, having double residences in Iriiri and Lojom is a strategy that fosters wealth accumulation, for the majority of the families living in Lojom, going to the trading centre is not an opportunity to accumulate wealth but merely a way to survive.

## Conclusion

Villages around Iriiri, including Lojom, serve as ‘reservoirs of labour’ for the centre, and as places for both agricultural and off-farm production. Many inhabitants of Lojom work for the inhabitants of Iriiri, with workers belonging, for the most part, to the class of the poor and very poor. Moreover, within the same family, regardless of their social class, wives from Lojom go to town to sell and exchange products in order to provide food for their children and they work for free in their husbands’ businesses. Their husbands are mostly living in Iriiri, when they are wealthy.

This relationship of production between Iriiri and Lojom across classes and within each family between men and women – especially in polygynous families – reproduces the *status quo*. This is because, given the type of work opportunities available, by living in Lojom, both poor and very poor classes are unable to accumulate wealth. Secondly, for agricultural activities and the sale of natural products, wives’ labour is used by male heads of families, and women have little control and access over the profits they contribute to generate, getting only a minimum part of the profit necessary for their survival and giving the rest to their husbands. In addition, economic activities, such as charcoal production, that are carried out by families in poor and very poor classes, are environmentally unsustainable in the long run, but in the absence of new or other economic opportunities, they are indispensable activities to earn enough income to survive.

Historically, activities such as selling firewood and farming someone’s garden were considered supplementary activities to the family’s overall production, rather than fundamental activities for survival, as they are presently. The overall picture that can be drawn is one in which a large number of people with marginal agricultural production and limited ownership of assets supplement these scarcities with low-return and low status off-farm activities in order to survive. The type of work carried out by poorer classes – such as basic farming or unskilled labour – condemns them to dependency on either the businessmen from outside the region or the few wealthier male employers (or Big Men) living in Iriiri and other villages. On the contrary, those who are already wealthy can exploit cheap labour, and diversify their asset base across village and town.

The failure of the agrarian system to generate the conditions for social reproduction – e.g. low agricultural production and few animals – means that a precarious wage economy has emerged to provide food and other basic needs. This situation can be taken advantage of by those with existing assets to accumulate wealth in different ways, both in the villages and towns of Karomoja. Specifically, the wealthier classes, through the construction of shops, bars, and restaurants, with the possession of the means of production such as grinding mills, combined with the wives' production of charcoal and local beer, have been able to reproduce and accumulate new wealth.

In conclusion, the dependency on wage labour (both agricultural and non-agricultural) to earn money to buy food, experienced by the people of Lojom due to marginal agricultural production and 'livestock dispossession' and reproduced by the scarcely remunerative activities available in Iriiri, has generated particular relations of production across classes, and between men and women within each family. The present material and social conditions (*ceteris paribus*) foster both social differentiation across villages and towns, and reproduce and maintain patriarchal relationships within families and across classes (see Chapter Ten). As Fratkin and Roth (1990) have pointed out,

Rich stockowners move into towns and manage their herds through hired labor, and poorer Basseri also move to the towns seeking wage-paying jobs. (Fratkin and Roth, 1990: 386)

## **8. Roman Catholics and Formal Education**

## Introduction

In addition to the trading of labour and natural resources, there are other factors that push families living in villages such as Lojom to be a part of more urban places, such as Iriiri. Since the 1980s, the Catholic Church has provided relief, agricultural projects and formal education to the destitute Bokora who resettled in Iriiri. The church in this area has historically offered opportunities to many to improve their welfare, and they have done this mostly by building schools and dispensaries, by providing jobs in agricultural activities, and by giving charity to those in-need. Through its ‘civilizing mission’ the church also influenced discourses and practices of development, encouraging its congregates to practise sedentary agriculture, to stop raiding, and to obtain formal education. These dynamics have had different impacts across the different social classes in Lojom.

In Chapter Three I discussed the role played by the Catholic Church as a key agent in setting the stage for the ‘agrarian transformation’ that occurred in many parts of Karamoja, particularly amongst the Bokora. In this chapter I will investigate the impact of the activities and opportunities provided by different Christian churches over time – especially the Catholic Church –, and their influence on class formation and social differentiation, in the village of Lojom.

The aim of this chapter is twofold: firstly, to investigate the socio-economic advantages of being associated with different religious denominations over time – and specifically the impact of formal education on social differentiation – and secondly, to trace the influence of powerful narratives propagated by the Catholics on social reproduction.

This chapter also argues that, as a consequence of the historical absence of the central state in Karamoja, the Catholic Church was able to effectively take over the state’s role in the area for a long time, with the presence of Catholic parishes in every sub-county and Catholic missions in every District. In light of the political power *vacuum* that the Catholic Church found itself occupying, it gained disproportionate influence in setting development narratives and discourses in the region.



## 8.1 Roman Catholics in Karamoja

### 8.1.1 Aspects of Christianity in Karamoja

In Uganda, the majority of people are of Christian faith, both Anglican and Catholic, and it is one of the African countries that embraced Christianity fairly quickly (Knighton, 1990). In Karamoja, the history of Catholic missionaries – also called ‘soldiers of Christ’ (Vincent, 1982: 106) – started in 1924, and their major aim was to convert the Karamojong people to the Christian faith, mostly through the institution of formal<sup>235</sup> education, health care and charity to the poor (Dyson-Hudson, 1962). In 1933<sup>236</sup>, two Catholic missionaries<sup>237</sup> opened the second<sup>238</sup> permanent school for Karamojong children at Kangole, in the Napak District, amongst the Bokora people, just a few kilometres away from the Protestant school that was already there (Dyson-Hudson, 1962; Cisternino, 1985b; Knighton, 1990; 2002). This signalled both the beginning of Catholic formal education in the region, as well as the high level of competition between Protestants and Catholic churches in trying to convert the largest number of Karamojong (Novelli, 1980). As Novelli (1980) has pointed out,

[...] with their higher financial capacity, the Protestants are able to easily lure these poor souls with the shine of their coins, with a new shimmering dress, with a morsel of food...it is a real bait and many, unfortunately, have fallen prey!<sup>239</sup> (Farina, 1938, quoted in Novelli, 1980: 29)

The first period of Catholic missions in the region lasted seven years only (1933-1940), around the time of the Second World War, and at this time Italian missionaries were also detained by the British (Novelli, 1980: 17). In 1952, when the colonial government allowed the first Catholic missionaries to return to Karamoja after the war, there was almost no record of the evangelization efforts promulgated during the

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<sup>235</sup> What is meant by ‘formal’ education is a ‘western’ type of education.

<sup>236</sup> The period between 1924 and 1933 saw a list of failed attempts made by the Church Missionary Society at establishing by some missions schools (Dyson-Hudson, 1962).

<sup>237</sup> The Comboni missionaries used to be called the Verona Fathers; see Comboni Missionaries (n.d.) Available at: <http://veronafathersmirfield.com/comboni-missionaries/>

<sup>238</sup> In 1929, the Protestants from the Bible Church Missionary Society established the first school for Karamojong at Lotome (Napak District), with Reverend W. Owen.

<sup>239</sup> My translation from the original Italian text: ‘I Protestanti, potendo disporre di denaro, riescono facilmente ad adescare questi tapini, con il luccicare di una moneta, con un vestito nuovo fiammante, con un boccone appetitoso...una vera esca e parecchi, purtroppo, abboccano!’

1930s (Novelli, 1980). However, between 1952 and 1964, the Catholic Church, supported by the colonial government, decided to focus all its efforts on building several church schools throughout the region (ibid.), as a way to evangelize the Karamojong and exert influence over them (Dyson-Hudson, 1962).

At this time, aside from a few Karamojong 'converts', the Catholic Church did not accomplish its intended goals, neither through direct evangelization (1933-1940), nor through the church schools (1952-1964). In January 1964, the Ministry of Education took over all the church schools in a sort of 'nationalization process' (Novelli, 1980), and this marked the beginning of a period of charity conducted by the Catholic Church, as a way to enhance evangelization and disseminate Christian values. The hungry, for example, were attracted to the Catholic missions through the provision of free food aid. As they waited in line for their food rations, they would receive catechism. The missionaries named this period of evangelization period of 'the flour Christians' (ibid.).

As previously analysed in Chapter Three, the role of the Catholic Church in Karamojong everyday life grew in importance over time, especially in the aftermath of the great famine of 1980. That time was the turning point for the history of the Catholic Church in Karamoja as the missionaries had a crucial role in helping the population survive the famine. Novelli has pointed out how, during this time, the Karamojong

[...] 'realize[d] that missionaries were different from the other white people who had established foreign rule over them' as well as they thought that [...] 'to have a member of the family in the world of these foreigners [missionaries], could be an asset rather than a liability.' (Novelli, 1999: 309-310)

In fact, the support delivered by the Catholic Church during that time materialized in an increase in the number of baptisms and, more broadly, in the leadership role the Catholic Church took on, becoming stronger among the local population (see Chapter Three). Starting from the 1980s, Church missions were thus not seen only as educational institutions, and this process started to change already after 1964.

Whether or not the process of 'Christian enculturation' described by Knighton (1990), that began in 1924 was fully assimilated by the Karamojong is beyond the

scope of this study. However, in contrast to previous studies that have portrayed the Karamojong who converted to Christianity as ‘no longer Karamojong’ (Dyson-Hudson, 1962; Novelli, 1980; Knighton, 1990: 1, 2005), this research shows how Christianity has been embedded in the local culture as an important source of people’s identity and reference values, especially amongst the younger generations.

### **8.1.2 Christian values and development narratives**

The vital importance that Christian missions in Karamoja acquired over time was largely due to the fact that, both under the Ugandan Protectorate and under the subsequent post-colonial governments, the responsibility over the provision of public services in the region – such as schools, health care and welfare – was left in the hands of the Catholic and Anglican missions (Dyson-Hudson, 1962; Knighton, 1990). Through schools and parishes, the Catholic Church has both promoted new practices of development and encouraged the transformation of the Karamojong from transhumant agro-pastoralists to sedentarized farmers and wage labourers.

Historically, the different Christian church denominations and various Ugandan governments have had the different goals of evangelization and local administration in Karamoja, but they have used similar means to reach them: the ‘de-pastoralisation’ of the Karamojong that entailed the sedentarization of male herders, and the advancement of agricultural production (see both Chapters One and Three). In the process of ‘de-pastoralisation’, the promotion of formal education started by the missionaries and followed by the government was a common policy to encourage sedentarization and promote different values. While the establishment of the central administration attempted by the different governments in Karamoja was always characterized by violence and conflict, the Christian missionaries’ activity of evangelization was relatively ‘painless’ for the population, and was deemed overall successful by the missions.

Through schools, health centres and parishes, the Catholic Church has offered some sort of ideological edifice regarding both the changing of modes of production and the justification for these changes, as well as the disempowerment of traditional

values and livelihood activities, and the reproduction of a new economic system.<sup>240</sup> A similar influence of Christian institutions on the transformation of traditional modes of production has been found by Jean and John Comaroff (1997) in south Africa,

The civilizing mission, as an ideological vanguard, did prepare the way for what “came behind it”. It insinuated new forms of individualism, new regimes of value, new kinds of wealth, new means and relations of production, new religious practices. And it set in motion processes of class formation. (Comaroff and Comaroff, 1997: 163-164)

The social value that often arises during Catholic mass in Iriiri is that of being a ‘good and peaceful peasant’, with the rhetoric of the hard-working man in opposition to those who are poor because they are ‘lazy’. As one Catholic missionary once affirmed<sup>241</sup>, ‘a herder is someone who uses his legs a lot to compensate for the fact the he does not use his head much.’ This was evident during the group discussions<sup>242</sup> I conducted, with families in the very poor class often being defined as such because they are ‘lazy’ and families in the poor class being defined as hard working families (see Chapter Four). These discourses were strongly stressed by Christian members of the group discussion, such as Lokwaakou. Similarly, throughout all of my fieldwork, in other interviews, people repeated the same discourse. For instance, a young Catholic educated girl discussed how,

you are poor when you do not have hands, when you do not have legs. If you have it you can work. If you are poor you do not believe in God. Church members help the poor. When you know God you are not poor. Some poor people are generally “lazy” they do not want to work. You can always change your situation by working hard.<sup>243</sup>

In Namalu, an agricultural area near Iriiri, the rhetoric of the ‘good farmer’ is pushed to the point that the local Catholic parish used to assign scholarships only to those worthy students who have been engaged in different kinds of agricultural jobs such as ploughing, land clearance and sowing.<sup>244</sup> Conversely, the negative rhetoric is placed upon young herders whose main activity is to graze animals, rather than go to

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<sup>240</sup> Refer back to Chapter Three for the history of Catholic religion in Karamoja.

<sup>241</sup> Interview with regional leader number #5 (see Appendix I).

<sup>242</sup> Interview with group discussion number #10 (see Appendix I).

<sup>243</sup> Interview with group discussion number #6 (see Appendix I).

<sup>244</sup> Interview with regional leader number #2 (see Appendix I).

school and do farming. The narrative that has also been used is that the possession of livestock is the cause of violence among the Karamojong, hence the Catholic value of peace was also implemented through the promotion of agriculture at the expense of traditional livestock keeping.

These social values have been a part of both the Anglican and Catholic missionary narrative in Karamoja for decades, and they have also been embraced and reproduced by the NRM Government, through its disarmament activities and the promotion of settled agriculture.<sup>245</sup> Whether this has caused changes in Karamojong beliefs or not is something that is hard to establish. What can be observed is the affirmation of a powerful narrative, and practices of development that link farming, peace and formal education to development, while associating livestock-keeping with illiteracy, poverty and conflict. In particular, the value of formal education and peace is juxtaposed to keeping livestock. Development is explained and understood as acquiring formal education, doing farming and being in peace, while pastoralism is framed as living in 'backwardness' and in conflict.<sup>246</sup>

During discussions with educated youth, the terms of comparison were always their parents; for example, several of them often mentioned the same statement, which was: 'My father was illiterate because he was a pastoralist'.<sup>247</sup> Therefore, the value of being educated is expressed through its relation to livelihood, rather than through the historical process that has led to an increased access to formal education. The same findings were collected from parents, both in Lojom and Iriiri, who expressed the unquestionable societal value of formal education, which has led to the new parenting value of being able to provide education to children because this is the indispensable competency to overcome poverty.

The narrative that through the acquisition of formal education and by farming any Karamojong can get out of poverty is popular in Iriiri and Lojom, particularly among those individuals who lost their livestock a long time ago. In Chapter Six I discussed the low performance of agricultural production in Lojom, which is not enough to secure subsistence to most of people. Throughout the course of this chapter

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<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

<sup>246</sup> Chapter Nine will analyse the role of the state in defining what 'development' is for the NRM in Karamoja.

<sup>247</sup> Interview with group discussion number #6 (see Appendix I).

I will discuss how, in Lojom, the development narrative, according to which through the acquisition of formal education any Karamojong can get a job and start accumulating wealth, persists despite evidence to the contrary.

## 8.2 Religion in Iriiri and Lojom

### 8.2.1 Religious circles in Lojom

In the village of Lojom, 79 per cent of all families self-identified themselves as being Catholic<sup>248</sup> and only a minority identified as Anglican, Pentecostal, or as followers of the traditional religion. The data on religious affiliation in Lojom refers to the heads of families only. However, if the *ekapolon* of a homestead joins a certain church denomination, this creates a strong incentive for other members of his homestead to follow the same religion.<sup>249</sup> Therefore, the high number of Catholics in Lojom is explainable both by the fact that the *ekapolon* of Lojom is Adupinkal, who is of Catholic religion, as well as by the historically long presence of Italian Catholic missionaries among the Bokora.

Most people who currently live in Lojom were originally born in Kangole and Mathany sub-counties – the so called ‘land of Bokora’ –, and in both these places residents benefitted for a long time from large-scale Catholic missionary activities through churches, schools, dispensaries and relief.<sup>250</sup> In particular, the church schools were among the first in Karamoja, and unsurprisingly, the Bokora are often portrayed as the most educated sub-ethnic group in the region (Gray, 2000). Since the 1980s, among the Bokora, the ratio number of schools per population was the highest in Karamoja due to missionary activity (Cisternino, 1985b) that found a ‘fertile ground’ to promote their activities among the stockless and destitute (see Chapter Three). As a result, currently the major narrative across the region is that the Bokora are the first and most educated sub-ethnic group of the region.

At present, in Lojom, Sunday is the day for prayer and entire families from remote villages travel to Iriiri to attend mass. In the morning hours, people go to the Catholic and Anglican churches where two different masses are held; in the early morning there is the English mass and in the late morning there is mass in the local

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<sup>248</sup> This finding does not necessarily entail that the people of Lojom have embraced completely both Catholic values and practices.

<sup>249</sup> Interview with regional informant number #3 (see Appendix I).

<sup>250</sup> For instance, the hospital in Mathany (Napak District) is still considered as one of the best hospitals in the whole country and it was build in 1968 by the Catholic missionaries.

language<sup>251</sup>, which gives enough time to those who live in faraway villages to reach the centre in time to attend mass in the *Ngakaramojong* language. In particular, on Sunday the Catholic parish has many people attending, mainly the elderly, children and women, to the extent that people have to gather outside the parish because there is not enough room inside. On this day, people spend most of the mass singing Christian songs (see Chapter Ten). People's affiliation with Christianity does not end with the attendance of mass on Sunday. Throughout the area, many schools and health centres are Christian and teachers and personnel are of Christian faith, which pushes people, and especially students, in the involvement and commitment to religious practices.

The historical presence of Christian institutions and the formation of different social groups based on faith, has resulted in those who are members accessing important resources and improving their socio-economic condition. For example, in Iriiri, many Catholics form local saving groups<sup>252</sup>, and every month they gather next to the parish, in the centre of the town, to check their accounts and borrow money. Betty, for instance, is Catholic, she works as a cleaner for an NGO and as the accountant of the savings group of the Iriiri parish. The Catholic father of the mission is also affiliated to the group, as are most other members who revolve around the parish. While the Catholic faith is the common factor across the members of this group, on an economic level the group is formed by families from different social classes, such as the better off, middle and poor classes.<sup>253</sup> Individuals from the different social classes deposit different amounts of money in the savings group, ranging from 10,000 UGX to some millions.<sup>254</sup> The principle behind this saving group is that 'people from the Catholic Church' are generally perceived as more trust worthy and reliable compared to others, regardless of their social class.

In this regard, being Christian (both Catholic and Protestant) in Iriiri and Lojom, is thus an advantage, especially for the poor class, because it provides access to a social network that allows members to borrow money for matters such as buying

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<sup>251</sup> The promulgation of mass in local languages followed from the Second Vatican Council in 1974 (Novelli, 1980).

<sup>252</sup> In NGO language these are also known as VSLAs, which stands for Village Saving and Loans Association.

<sup>253</sup> Interview with case study number #2 (see Appendix I).

<sup>254</sup> Ibid.



necessary implements, for brewing local beer for example, or to pay for health care in case of need.

### **8.2.2 Religious circles and development**

In Karamoja, being part of a religious group does not always enhance one's opportunity to establish profitable social relationships, and religious affiliations can sometimes also be dividing factors among social groups. A concrete example of the relevance in Karamoja of being affiliated to certain religious denominations dates back to 2010 when, prior to the beginning of one of the major public works programmes ever implemented by the WFP in the region,<sup>255</sup> and still running to this date, the IOM conducted the largest targeting exercise in the history of Karamoja, on behalf of the WFP. At this time the IOM sub-contracted faith-based organizations such as the Karamoja Diocesan Development Services – the development arm of the Church of Uganda – and the Pentecostal Assemblies of God,<sup>256</sup> which undertook the targeting exercise on behalf of the IOM. In answer to the question on why some people in the village were enrolled to get the grant offered while others were not, Francis Tuke the Local Council One of Nabwal village (Iriiri sub-county) reported that during registration, in January and February 2010, the Karamoja Diocesan Development Services only targeted vulnerable people from the Church of Uganda (Anglican), while leaving others out.<sup>257</sup> Given the overall context of poverty and vulnerability in Iriiri and Lojom, being among those who were registered to the WFP food aid programme was of major importance to any family in the area. In this context, belonging to a specific church certainly bonds some people together and generates opportunities to improve people's lives, but it also creates the politics of each church denomination.

Catholics in Lojom are also helped by the Catholic parish of Iriiri, with every local church helping its own network; for example, during the week, throughout the day, old people and extremely poor individuals sit by the Catholic parish of Iriiri waiting

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<sup>255</sup> The programme was called Karamoja Productive Assets Programme which then became the Second Northern Uganda Social Action Fund.

<sup>256</sup> This is usually referred to as PAG, its influence is rising in Uganda and slowly in Karamoja as well.

<sup>257</sup> Group discussion with beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of social protection programmes, December 10, 2012.

to get *posho*, tobacco, and medication. In addition, youths are sometimes employed as *leja-leja* to clean the parish, slash the garden, and cultivate the orchard.<sup>258</sup> The support provided helps the parish keep its good reputation in the sub-county, while providing some work opportunities to its network of congregates.

Over time, the Catholic parish's network and influence in the area has also been achieved through remunerative job opportunities. This is explicit, for instance, when the major NGO in Iriiri – Servizio Volontario Internazionale<sup>259</sup> – with its guesthouse and office built on land given in concession by the Catholic Church,<sup>260</sup> on more than one occasion received pressure<sup>261</sup> from the Catholic Father to employ field staff of Catholic faith only.<sup>262</sup> As previously discussed, the few Karamojong who work for NGOs become among the wealthiest people in their own villages.

There are other economic incentives as well that push many Karamojong to be part of Christian circles. Several NGOs in the region are Christian organizations, being either directly faith-based organizations or NGOs and Community Based Organizations that are inspired by Christian values. Often, NGOs do not employ Karamojong staff. Many are employed from the near Teso region – with whom the Karamojong share a similar language – or from other parts of the country. The relatively low employment of Karamojong personnel in the humanitarian and development sector is an issue that is often raised by the Local Council Five. However, what can generally be stated is that the employment dynamics<sup>263</sup> of the Karamojong show Catholic NGOs preferring to employ Catholic staff, which is a similar phenomenon in the Anglican and Adventist NGOs as well. The underlying motive in having only Christian staff is that staff can be 'trusted' because they subscribe to similar values.<sup>264</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> Interview with case study number #17 (see Appendix I).

<sup>259</sup> SVI is a secular Italian NGO based in Iriiri since 1996.

<sup>260</sup> The deal is that as soon as SVI completes its project, will return the land plus the guesthouse – build with the NGO's funds – to the Catholic parish.

<sup>261</sup> However, no pressure was ever exercised by the Catholic parish on SVI with regards to the targeting of various programme beneficiaries.

<sup>262</sup> Interview with regional informant number #5 (see Appendix I).

<sup>263</sup> A separate study should be conducted to investigate the high level corruption of local employers working for international and national NGOs over the process of selection of local staff. During my time in Karamoja, I heard of many incidents involving candidates paying up to 500,000 UGX to bribe the interviewer in order to get the job.

<sup>264</sup> Interview with regional leader number #4 (see Appendix I).

Worldwide NGOs such as Samaritan Purse and World Vision, as well as more local NGOs such as *Cooperation and Development*, also use Christian backgrounds as part of their terms of reference for hiring Karamojong staff, and a letter of recommendation from the priest is often requested as a condition for employment. Once employed, the organizations make the entire staff perform daily devotion every morning, which lasts between 30 minutes and 1 hour. Secular NGOs also sometimes prefer to recruit local staff who are religious, for example, Catholic. This is a consequence of secular NGOs believing that the risk of employing staff that turn out to be corrupt is less pronounced among Karamojong who 'belong' to Catholic or Anglican parishes.<sup>265</sup> These stories partly explain the reasons why Christian churches are so popular in Karamoja and also why many Karamojong decide to be a part of religious circles (and in particular Catholics) and spend time in the parish on a daily basis. As will be clearer through the course of this chapter, being Christian and developing a good relationship with the local Father is an important competency, often an indispensable requisite, for being part of a network that provides people with important opportunities to improve their welfare, both in the short and long term.

### 8.2.3 Social classes and Catholic Church in Lojom

The majority of the inhabitants of Lojom are Catholics and except for the middle class, the percentage of Catholics increases together with their socio-economic status. Conversely, traditional religion and wealth are inversely related. Table 23 shows the correlation between social classes and different religious beliefs in Lojom.

**Table 23: Lojom social classes and religious beliefs<sup>266</sup>**

| Social Classes      | Religious beliefs |             |             |          |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|----------|
|                     | Catholic          | Traditional | Pentecostal | Anglican |
| Better off<br>(N=4) | 100%              | 0%          | 0%          | 0%       |
| Middle<br>(N=13)    | 69.2%             | 0%          | 15.4%       | 15.4%    |
| Poor<br>(N=56)      | 82.1%             | 8.9%        | 5.4%        | 3.6%     |
| Very Poor<br>(N=26) | 76.9%             | 11.5%       | 0%          | 11.5%    |

<sup>265</sup> My own direct experience as WFP Programme Officer in Karamoja region between 2010 and 2012.

<sup>266</sup> Data on religious beliefs refer to the whole family and not to individuals.

Source: Author's census survey

Table 23 shows only a tenuous positive correlation between Catholicism and wealth, whereas more ethnographic data shows how the socio-economic opportunities historically provided by Catholic institutions to the parents of families currently living in Iriiri and Lojom – mainly through formal education, distant adoptions and sponsorships – was in fact an important factor in social differentiation.

Akol, for example, is from Iriiri, he is Catholic, and through sponsorship from Italia Solidale – an Italian faith-based organization – he was able to complete his primary and secondary education. He recently completed his Bachelor's degree at the University of Makerere in social science, in Kampala, and he now works for Caritas, the 'development arm' of the Catholic diocese in Karamoja. Without the support from Italia Solidale Akol would not have been able to attain his higher education. The sponsorship provided Akol with a monthly stipend, books, pens and a mattress, and allowed him to be enrolled in the best schools of the region. The targeting criteria for the sponsorship were based on common indicators that apply to almost every child in the region, such as vulnerability, poverty and food insecurity. The more segregating parameters include his faith and the 'good words' from the local priest. The priest of Iriiri played a key role in linking Akol with Italia Solidale, which helped him get the sponsorship.<sup>267</sup> These opportunities are, however, for a minority of people only. Furthermore, being a member of the Catholic Church in Iriiri does not always automatically result in such benefits, and it is mostly the relationship with the local priest that allows some children only to access these opportunities.

Until two generations ago, churches were popular mainly during times of famine and insecurity (see Chapter Three), whereas today they have become important social centres for people from both towns and villages, formally educated and non-educated. However, in the past, it was fewer people who were associated with Catholic circles on a daily basis and sooner or later got opportunities to improve their individual/families' welfare. Presently, the Catholic Church still provides important opportunities for its congregates, but the potential number of people relying on it has increased enormously, which has diminished the socio-economic advantages of religious affiliation, now having a minor impact as a driver of wealth

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<sup>267</sup> Interview with case study number #17 (see Appendix I).

accumulation, in comparison to the past. These changes are due to several reasons, among which are the massive demographic increment, the 'livestock dispossession' for many (see Chapter Five), and the growing number of Catholics.

Nevertheless, as explained in the previous section, there are still some advantages to being associated with the Catholic parish in Iriiri, and this partly explains the tenuous positive correlation between being Catholic and wealthy in Lojom. Lokwaakou, for instance, is an example of the generational changes in the dynamics inherent to religious affiliation, education and wealth accumulation. He is one of the wealthiest people in Lojom and, in the 1980s, he was helped by Catholic missionaries to complete his secondary schooling. Being one of the few people of his generation (he was born in 1968) who completed lower secondary school (4 years), in 1993 he was hired as a civil servant by the Lutheran World Federation, an international faith-based organization, whose headquarters are based in Switzerland. He worked in Moroto for the Lutheran World Federation for about ten years until his contract terminated and he moved to Lojom in 2003 to join his uncle. With the money accumulated during his time at Lutheran World Federation, he was able, among other things, to marry three wives, build a house in Iriiri centre and buy two grain machines.<sup>268</sup> The economic value (comparative advantages) of formal education in Lokwaakou's generation, for whom there were still many job opportunities, was still high because few people in the region completed secondary school and, as will be shown in the next section, the quality of formal education in Karamoja, particularly in terms of the ratio between teachers and students, was higher in comparison to now.

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<sup>268</sup> Interview with case study number #2 (see Appendix I).

## 8.3 Formal Education

### 8.3.1 Formal education in Karamoja

Historically, in Karamoja, the possession of formal education as a factor for social differentiation has had different weight overtime. Through the twentieth century, Christian missionaries' concentrated their efforts to evangelizing the Karamojong, exerting influence through the building of church schools and the spread of formal education in the region.

During the colonial time, missionary efforts also served the needs of the central administration, in a 'win-win' solution for both the Christian missions and the central government. Specifically, missionaries helped the government by 'produc[ing] many government officers and clerks, who gradually replaced the Acholi and Teso in Karamoja, especially as assistant chiefs' (Pazzaglia 1982: 64). What followed was that the first few Karamojong men who were willing to radically break with their own society by converting to Christianity and associating to Christian circles, were also those who first learned how to read and write, with some of them also moving into politico-administrative positions (Dyson-Hudson, 1962; Novelli, 1980). An example of these changes is how, when Rada and Neville Dyson-Hudson, who were among the most important ethnographers to conduct research in Karamoja and lived in the region between January 1956 and September 1958, did not use interpreters because the few who were able to speak English were already employed by the local Administration or as schoolteachers by the Missions (Dyson-Hudson, 1966: viii). This finding is similarly described by Fratkin *et al.* (2011) in other pastoral areas, whereby:

[...] formal education has been a primary benefit to children in these communities who as adults have pursued employment in government, business, and non-government organizations. (Fratkin *et al.*, 2011: 1)

Traditionally, the Karamojong, as many other transhumant agro-pastoralists, were generally reluctant to send children to school because of the need for young males to herd animals far from the homesteads, especially during the dry seasons, and for young females to be at home doing domestic and agricultural work (see Chapter Three). Considering the relatively high costs required to register children at school,

sending children to school was a 'double loss' for any Karamojong family (Dyson-Hudson, 1962). Therefore, formal education was of low interest to the Karamojong and, unsurprisingly, following the establishment of permanent mission schools in 1933, the daily male school attendance increased only from 200 to 700 pupils in the entire region, throughout almost three decades (ibid.: 784). In a desperate attempt to increase school attendance, in the 1960s, the central government passed a law according to which one child per family had to attend school, which was a policy that lasted only a few years (Cisternino, 1985a).

Despite the low popularity of formal education, the few Karamojong men who first learned how to read and write, mainly during the colonial time, formed a local elite that did not exist before. They obtained important roles in their communities, formal power and influence, and they did types of work that the majority of the other Karamojong could not do. For a long time, there was a trend that has proportionally decreased over time, of people who were formally educated in Karamoja through the mission schools finding a 'place' for themselves, in between the colonial and post-colonial governments and in the various NGOs that passed through the region.

### **8.3.2 Formal education in Lojom**

The proliferation of formal education in Karamoja found a 'fertile terrain' among those Karamojong groups who lost their animals and became sedentary. In the 1980s, in Iriiri, the Catholic parish established itself and encouraged the destitute Bokora to send their children to school, while providing agricultural support to the parents. Furthermore, since 1981, the WFP began the school meals programme (see Chapter Three) that provided food at school in exchange for attendance. In this difficult time that afflicted the Bokora, the assistance provided by NGOs and Catholic missionaries was helpful to secure their subsistence, until the mid-1980s, when some families were able to rebuild their herds through raiding. In Iriiri, Christian evangelization and formal education found an opportunity among the destitute Bokora, who, dispossessed of their livestock, were dependent on external help. At the same time, the provision of assistance and education further increased sedentarization, thus further encouraging the process of 'de-pastoralisation'.

Gray (2000) has reconstructed this history very well:

By 1980, before they themselves had acquired guns, many Bokora were compelled to seek assistance from NGOs and missionaries in Karamoja, who offered famine relief and food-for-work. Others had migrated to more economically developed districts. Ultimately, these contacts would provide a number of Bokora with access to formal education, which would encourage their participation in the national economy and power structure. Today, a majority of the Karamojong employed by both government and non-government agencies in Kotido and Moroto Districts are Bokora. Ironically, their access to national and international funding has facilitated the re-entry of wealthy Bokora into the pastoralist sector, complicating their position in relation to the Matheniko, guns, and raiding. (Gray, 2000: 412)

These structural changes were pushed forward further with the Government of Uganda's adoption of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) policy in 1997.<sup>269</sup> This policy had a strong impact on the entire country to the point that, 'following the UPE policy, primary school enrolment more than doubled, from 3.1 million children in 1996 to 7.5 million in 2007' (Ssewamala *et al.*, 2011: 472). At the time, in Karamoja, in the district of Moroto, which included Napak district<sup>270</sup>, official statistics following the UPE also showed an increment in enrolment<sup>271</sup> from 8,978 in 1997 to 21,890 in 2001 (Chronic Poverty Research Centre, 2008). To this day, in Karamoja, the WFP school meals programme has provided an important incentive for children to attend school.

In Lojom, most children go to the primary school of Pilas, but despite the UPE, the school meals programme and other reforms aimed at increasing the level of formal literacy,<sup>272</sup> 64.8 per cent of people between ages 6 and 25 have never been to school.<sup>273</sup> Even among those who have gone to school, the percentage of the people who completed primary school is extremely low. In Lojom, only 3.6 per cent of those aged 13 years and above, who could have potentially obtained a primary school

<sup>269</sup> The UPE was implemented with the economic resources gathered from the HIPC initiative.

<sup>270</sup> As was pointed out in the previous chapter, Lojom is in Napak district.

<sup>271</sup> In Karamoja, the actual pupil attendance at school is much lower in comparison to the declared enrolment. This is due to an incentive whereby resources are allocated from the central government for the UPE by the WFP in the school meals programme, according to enrolment rather than actual attendance (see Chapter Nine).

<sup>272</sup> The Ugandan Government defines literacy as 'the ability for one to read with understanding and to write a simple sentence meaningfully in any language' (NPHC, 2014).

<sup>273</sup> According to the national census, in the rest of the region, the percentage of people between 6 and 25 years of age who have never been to school is 60.3%, almost 5% lower in comparison to Lojom (UBOS, 2015).



degree, have actually completed primary school. Numbers increase when we consider people who started some years in primary school without completing it; 21.2 per cent of the same sample (see Table 24). Those who have completed primary school are able to read and write, while those who have only done some years of primary show uneven levels of formal literacy.

**Table 24: Different population groups who have completed primary school and some primary school**

| Population groups   | % of people who have completed primary <sup>274</sup> | % of people who have done some primary |
|---|---|--|
| All population living in Lojom above 13 years<br>(N=364)          | 3.6%<br>(N=13)  | 21.2%<br>(N=77)                        |
| All population living in Lojom regardless of their age<br>(N=708) | 1.8%<br>(N=13)  | 19.1%<br>(N=135)                       |

Source: Author's census survey

In Lojom, the relatively high contrast between the percentages of people who have completed primary school as opposed to those who have only done some years is explained both by the high costs required to send children to school as well as the low quality of the education provided. Theoretically, since 1997, in the entire region, parents should not have been paying tuition fees for their children yet the major obstacle for children to complete primary education in Lojom and Iriiri are the costs. This finding was highlighted in a study done in Iriiri centre, which found that the majority of beneficiaries of the major social protection programmes (both free cash transfers and cash-for-work) used part of their grants to pay for school fees for their children and grandchildren (Caravani, 2012). When respondents refer to payment of 'school fees', they often refer to a number of related educational costs and not only tuition fees *per se*. In fact, parents in Iriiri and Lojom are still expected to meet other 'hidden costs' such as firewood, salt, cleaners, a cook (to prepare meals at school), as well as children's uniforms and textbooks. In addition, parents often contribute to the maintenance of school teachers and, under the UPE, they have to cover costs because payments from the central government tend to be delayed. Lastly, even those who

<sup>274</sup> The table considers those few individuals (N=2) who received Adult Basic Education for Karamoja (known as ABEK) as if they had completed formal primary school.

have been able to complete primary school have mentioned the ‘high costs’ in obtaining actual school certificates (ibid.).

Overall, Karamoja has never been a region well-known in Uganda for the high quality of formal education provided to children. The low quality of formal education is mainly due to poorly trained teachers as the best teachers do not want to live in Karamoja given the inherent difficulties of insecurity, expensive living conditions and poor facilities. In addition, following the UPE, the already low ratio of teachers to students reduced further, which resulted in extremely crowded classrooms and few available teachers. Though there are no specific studies on the impact of the UPE in Karamoja, what was noted in the rest of the country, was that, as a result of the UPE, there has been a

[...] huge increase in enrolment [which] did not match the infrastructure in place, including a shortage of classrooms, teachers, instructional materials, and other related facilities. (Ssewamala *et al.*, 2011: 472)

According to Deininger (2003), while increasing students’ enrolment, the UPE policy reduced the quality of education provided, and, in 1999, he found that in the entire country, ‘about one quarter of the participating students failed to pass final examinations in primary school (2003: 292)’. Similarly, the low quality of education provided in Iriiri sub-county and the surrounding villages has made many students demotivated, which has caused a huge drop-out rate as well as many failing the final examinations. As shown in Table 25 below, this phenomenon is particularly pronounced in Lojom as its inhabitants display relatively worse education performances as opposed to their extended family living elsewhere, both in Karamoja and outside the region; 3.6 per cent versus 10.4 per cent.

**Table 25: Different population groups, closely related to the inhabitants of Lojom, living elsewhere, who have completed all of and partial primary school**

| Different Groups   | % of people who have completed primary | % of people who have done some primary |
|--|--|--|
| Lojom extended family living elsewhere<br>above 13 years<br>(N=201)          | 10.4%<br>(N=21)                        | 17.4%<br>(N=35)                        |
| Lojom extended family living elsewhere<br>regardless of their age<br>(N=292) | 7.5%<br>(N=22)                         | 18.5%<br>(N=54)                        |

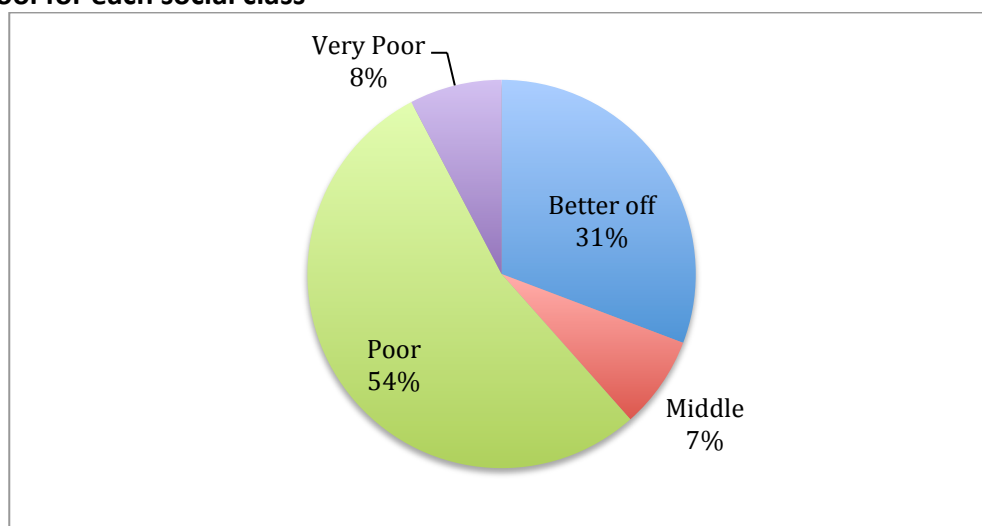
Source: Author’s census survey

It is certain that the adoption of the UPE policy has increased overall school attendance in the area of Lojom, but the low budget allocated to this policy from the central government did not allow schools to integrate the increment of students with an offer of good education. As shown in the next section, this lack of quality of formal education is one of the reasons for the reduced impact of education on social differentiation.

### 8.3.3 Social classes and formal education in Lojom

While formal education is usually portrayed as indispensable ‘human capital’ to escape from the intergenerational transmission of poverty (Bird *et al.*, 2011), this chapter highlights the limits of the formal education system available in the area of Iriiri in helping the people of Lojom improve their welfare. In the past, in the area of Iriiri, the acquisition of formal education through the affiliation with the Catholic Church played a major role in the improvement of a family’s welfare. Over time, it appears that the socio-economic advantages of acquiring formal education have in fact reduced impacts on social differentiation in Lojom. This is clear by looking at the levels of formal education among the population above 13 years of age (Figure 10) who have completed primary school, in relation to their respective social classes.

**Figure 10: Percentage of population above 13 years who have completed primary school for each social class**



Source: Author’s census survey

What has emerged in Lojom over time is that the few people who have been able to complete primary school (3.6%) do not necessarily belong to higher social classes. The small sample presented here is mainly composed of two classes, the poor and the better off, and, overall, there is no strong correlation between education and wealth. While in the past, some years of formal education were enough to aspire to and join government employment, nowadays in Lojom, the completion of primary school does not appear to be a crucial criterion for social differentiation anymore. As Cisternino (1985a) has pointed out,

Some Karimojong have joined government employment after some formal education. The majority (probably a few thousand) are in the army and the police force. A few are in the civil service mainly as lower-level administrators, clerks, and teachers. These tend to send all their children to school, but their low level of incomes and the lack of services in the region retard their ability to advance. (Cisternino, 1985a: 71)

This is an important issue because many people in Iriiri and across the Karamoja region currently believe that formal education is an important competency for overcoming poverty, yet many children who have gone to school (completing at least primary school) have not necessarily found job opportunities through which they could improve their welfare. Investment in formal education continues to be seen by many as one of the longest lasting investments, and many respondents in my survey identified the rationale of being able to rely on the younger members of their families for the future: ‘We also think that investing in the education of our children is the best investment since it will improve their life and therefore allow us to rely more on them in the future for help/support’.<sup>275</sup>

In the 1980s, Cisternino and Rowland had written:

Formal education, being more theoretical, or at least dealing with things remote from Karamojong experience and interest, is of very little use to those who do not get employment after leaving school (the majority). (Cisternino and Rowland, 1980: 23)

In the 1980s only a restricted number of people used to find employment after leaving school. Despite this fact, school enrolment has increased, generating a structural

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<sup>275</sup> interview with Nate Madeillena SAGE beneficiary and NUSAF2 worker, 21 October, 2012.

problem of unemployment<sup>276</sup> in the region.<sup>277</sup> Currently, the advantages of being formally educated are still used by a few individuals, but the majority of the formally educated are unemployed, without animals, and without skills to conduct any kind of job. The current economic value of formal education has thus decreased in importance due to a growing number of school enrolment that has not coincided with a growing number of job opportunities for the educated. Furthermore, the quality of education is generally low and the children who have managed to have the funds to pay school fees, by spending time at school do not possess the skills to manage a herd or cultivate the land, and ultimately find a job. As a result, the faith in formal education as a means to escape from poverty has created a generation of youth who possesses very basic education (only a few years of primary/almost illiterate) and no proper skills to produce or work. As Cisternino and Rowland (1980) have pointed out,

A Karimojong boy, returning to the village or kraal, after several years' education, may appear ignorant of practical matters to his fellow herdsmen especially if his education kept him away from home, as is the case with boarders. (Cisternino and Rowland, 1980: 23)

While in the past, there was a greater correlation between formal education and wealth because of the comparative advantages of being formally educated, this correlation is currently less direct. This has been a result of the increase in school enrolment, which was followed by an inadequate level of quality in the education provided, and by lack of employment opportunities for those who got an education.

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<sup>276</sup> Interestingly, the current local word used for unemployment '*ekeboyon*' did not exist traditionally.

<sup>277</sup> The Roman Catholic missionaries tried to overcome this issue through the establishment of vocational schools, but the offer is minimal compared to the needs.

## Conclusion

Through the provision of formal education and the promotion of different discourses on development, the Catholic Church has played a major role in Iriiri in the process of 'de-pastoralisation' and class formation. For a long time, in Iriiri, being part of the Catholic Church played an important role in the improvement of families' welfare through different support services and activities provided by the missionaries. The church exerted its influence through the foundation of church schools and those Karamojong who went to school and completed their formal education became part of a local elite.

Presently, the socio-economic advantages of being associated with the Catholic parish and acquiring formal education have minor impacts on wealth accumulation and subsistence strategies. This change is due to several reasons, among which is the massive growth in human population that has occurred in Karamoja over the past two generations, which was followed by a growing number of Catholic converts who are dependent on external assistance to secure their means of subsistence. The socio-economic opportunities provided by the Church did not increase equally to match the growing number of Catholics, thus resulting in the correlation between Catholic affiliation and wealth being less pronounced than in the past.

Catholic ideas and values on development and the teachings by local priests, teachers and missionaries, on what makes a 'good life', have encouraged families in Iriiri to embrace settled agriculture and formal education. However, both Chapter Six and this chapter have shown how the 'economic faith' in farming and formal education, under the given conditions, is a faith in competencies that are not actually sufficient to help most the people in the area overcome structural poverty and food insecurity. There are still some advantages to being associated with the Catholic parish in Iriiri and this partly explains the tenuous positive correlation between Catholic religion and wealth in Lojom. In particular, developing a good relationship with the local Father is often an indispensable requisite for being part of a network that provides people with important opportunities to improve their welfare both in the short and long term. However, the socio-economic advantages of being associated with 'the Catholic circle' and eventually obtaining formal education remain restricted to a few individuals. At

the same time, the formation of social groups based on faith cut across the different social classes and allow few individuals in poorer classes to access resources and opportunities to improve their welfare.

## **9. External Interventions: Aid Agencies and State Policies**



## **Introduction**

This chapter investigates how state and aid interventions in Karamoja influence class dynamics, gender relations and the generational dimensions of livelihood choices among the Bokora people living in Lojom. In particular, this chapter analyses recent state policies (social protection and public work programmes) used to consolidate influence over Karamoja, and the need for the aid industry to assist the poorer classes. The focus is on the outcomes of these policies in terms of production, accumulation and social reproduction, across the different social classes and within the families of Lojom. The analysis highlights how opportunities are created for only few individuals, and how entrenched dynamics explain the current situation of chronic poverty and food insecurity for the majority of people.

The argument in this chapter is that the Catholic Church, aid agencies and the national state have historically promoted new social values and a different economic production system amongst the Bokora. Essentially, this was a 'de-pastoralisation' process that occurred within the Bokora, which led to places such as Iriiri and Lojom becoming increasingly economically diversified and resulted in the formation of social classes. Due to the type of dominant production system established, through state and aid patronage relations, a local elite in Lojom was legitimized in accumulating and reproducing new wealth, and the result was that most people were unable to accumulate wealth and remained trapped in low production and poverty.

### 9.1 Aid and state chronic poverty (re)producing policies<sup>278</sup>

The first Bokora settlers currently living in Lojom have been receiving aid (mainly food aid) ever since the great famine of 1980. The major actors that were helping the destitute Bokora in Iriiri were the Catholic Church, through missionary activities (see Chapters Three and Eight), followed by aid agencies that permanently established themselves in the region after the famine (see Chapter Three), thus creating a phenomenon which I define here as ‘humanitarian autocracy’. By this term I mean the external aid organizations’ total freedom in conceptualizing, setting and implementing the humanitarian agenda, regardless of the peoples’ and the government’s will and needs, in a *vacuum* of both state and local/indigenous power. This ‘governance system’ was maintained and reproduced in Karamoja by the convergence of ‘interests’ between two parties: aid agencies and dispossessed beneficiaries. The former wanted to ensure increased levels of donor funding over time, while the latter wanted to receive as much free aid as possible.

What is argued here is that ‘humanitarian autocracy’ lasted in Karamoja until the national state (NRM regime) appeared on the development scene in the region, through the disarmament programme of the early 2000s (see Chapters Three and Five).<sup>279</sup> This state of affairs turned the local population into chronic beneficiaries of different aid programmes. Presently, after 36 years (1980-2016), since the first large food aid distributions, despite the recent stronger role played by the Ugandan state, both unconditional and conditional food aid have continued to be provided in Karamoja and Iriiri, creating a sort of ‘institutionalisation of relief’ (cf. Bradbury, 1998).<sup>280</sup>

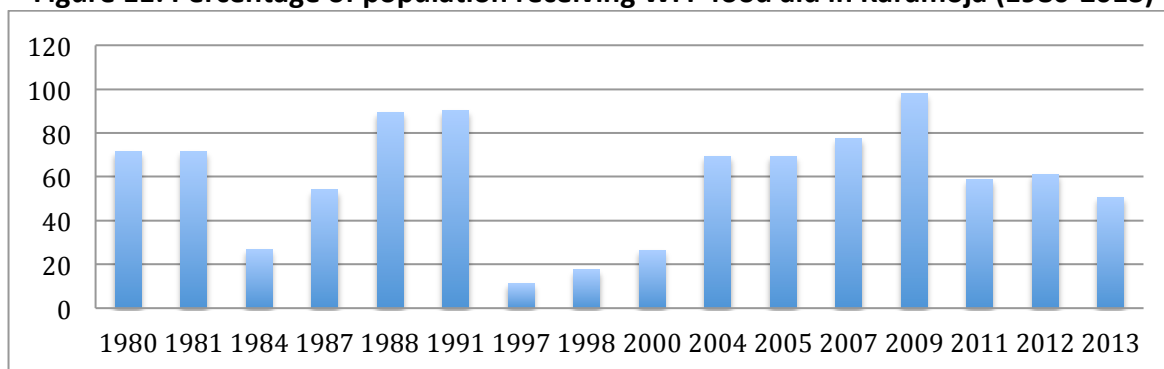
Figure 11 below shows the percentage of people in Karamoja receiving WFP food aid between 1980 and 2013.<sup>281</sup>

<sup>278</sup> While Bradbury (1998) talks about ‘government disaster producing policy’, here the emphasis is not on disasters but on policies that reproduce low production and poverty; in a word, the *status quo*.

<sup>279</sup> Multiple discussions with Ben Knighton, Professor at the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, UK.

<sup>280</sup> Since the 1980s, the WFP has provided employment opportunities to many of the so called ‘seasonal food insecure people’, through food and cash-for-work schemes. This is the conclusion of the analysis I conducted for the WFP of all the project documents, from 1964 to 2014.

<sup>281</sup> This data refers to several WFP project documents and reports (see Methodology section in Chapter Two). In terms of population data, I primarily used the Census data of 1980 (population: 350,086), and between the years 1980 to 1984. I then used the Census data of 1991 (population: 370,423), and

**Figure 11: Percentage of population receiving WFP food aid in Karamoja (1980-2013)**

Sources: WFP and UBOS

In 2011, following the increased security in the aftermath of the disarmament exercise, social protection programmes began to appear in the region. Besides the usual humanitarian support provided by the WFP to the poorest families – identified as those who do not have an adult able-bodied member to work – through unconditional food transfers (General Food Distribution) a ‘different’ kind of programme appeared in the region named the WFP Second Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF2). Between 2011 and 2014, this social protection programme initially targeted 50 per cent and then 40 per cent of the entire population, through conditional food and cash transfers.<sup>282</sup> Since May 2012, the other major programme running has been the Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE), a type of pension system that provides monthly cash transfers to the elderly aged 60 years and above. Overall, the WFP General Food Distribution, WFP/NUSAF2 and SAGE have been the largest programmes available in the region over the recent years and it is hard to find a single village in Karamoja that does not have beneficiaries of these three programmes.

Lojom is a good example of this history and in fact, in 2013-2014, most families living there were either themselves beneficiaries of a humanitarian and social protection programmes, or were relatives of a beneficiary (see Table 24). There were also a number of cases in which members of the same family participated in different programmes. Typical examples of this were families in which the grandparents were

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between the years 1987 to 1991. I then used the 2002 Census data (population: 721,536), and between the years 1997 to 2007. Lastly I used the Census data of 2014 (population: 990,000), and between the years 2009 to 2013. This data includes the following types of food aid: unconditional food aid, food-for-work and cash-for-work. It does not include institutional food aid, such as school meals programme, supplementary feeding, etcetera.

<sup>282</sup> In 2011 the WFP/NUSFA2 targeted 456,684 individuals out of a total of almost 1 million people living in Karamoja.

beneficiaries of both free cash transfers under SAGE and free food aid beneficiaries from the WFP, and the grandchildren were participants of food or cash-for-work activities under the WFP/NUSAF2.

This high presence of aid activities in Lojom, as in most villages in Karamoja, resulted in up to 83 per cent of the people living there being involved, for example, in food-for-work activities, at least once in the twelve months between 2013 and 2014. Table 26 below shows how food-for-work was the most common type of assistance provided in Lojom, followed by the provision of trees and stoves (72%), and the provision of seeds and tools for agricultural activities (59%).

**Table 26: Types of aid received from the families of Lojom between 2013 and 2014**

| Types of assistance | Food aid | Food-for-Work | Cash-for-Work | Free cash | Seeds & Tools | Trees & Stoves <sup>283</sup> | Health Care assistance | Livestock | Animal drugs |
|---------------------|----------|---------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| % Population        | 44       | 83            | 51            | 22        | 59            | 72                            | 51                     | 15        | 4            |

Source: Author's census survey

However, due to the unreliability and relatively small quantity of food or cash received by each family, families belonging to the very poor class in Lojom do not survive on food aid.<sup>284</sup> The end of this chapter will illustrate how food aid is just one of the many livelihood activities exploited by poor and very poor classes in order to secure their subsistence. By supporting food gaps that result from own food production that does not meet subsistence, the current aid programmes certainly help, in part, the class of the very poor to make a living (see Chapter Six). However, the type and quantity of assistance provided does not help these families move forward, for instance, by accumulating assets and eventually becoming food self-sufficient. It is worth mentioning that in Karamoja, as a consequence of 'humanitarian autocracy', there are families who have been beneficiaries of WFP food aid programmes for up to three generations. In the next section I will show the ways in which NUSAF2, one of the

<sup>283</sup> Trees and stoves are grouped together because stove distribution is usually the solution to reduce the tree-cutting rate.

<sup>284</sup> Depending on the particular type of assistance provided, for example cash or food assistance, there are significant differences in the ways in which beneficiaries dispose of their cash/grants (Caravani, 2012).

major governmental programmes in Karamoja, has reproduced poverty and sustained the process of the ‘de-pastoralisation’ of the Bokora.

## **9.2 Second Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF2)’s case study**

The NUSAF2<sup>285</sup> is a multi-year national government programme funded by the World Bank and focused on the recovery of northern Uganda after the LRA insurgency and the Karamojong cattle raiding. The WFP received additional donor funds to support the implementation of certain activities of the NUSAF2 programme in Karamoja, such as the public works programme, which included the largest cash transfer scheme ever implemented in the history of the region.<sup>286</sup>

The WFP/NUSAF2<sup>287</sup> programme began in 2011 in Karamoja, with the aim of supporting poor families by providing temporary employment opportunities through public work programmes and agricultural inputs. According to the programme objective this support should have helped the targeted families “graduate” from dependence on humanitarian assistance towards self-sufficiency – a process which should be complete within a three-year timeframe (2011-2014) (WFP, 2011: 5).

In Iriiri and Lojom there is a very different picture compared to the one the WFP/NUSAF2 programme intended to achieve through its theory of change. Far from the ambitious ‘graduation’ the programme aimed at, it was unable to generate any savings among the beneficiaries, and this was mainly due to the unreliability and limited amounts of the cash transfers and the un-productivity of the public assets created. On the other hand, as indicated in the previous section, the programme did provide labour opportunities for many, which was helpful when cash transfers were made.

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<sup>285</sup> The NUSAF2 is closely related to a previous WFP programme called the Karamoja Productive Assets Programme, which was launched in 2010 as part of the agency’s policy shift from emergency to recovery support in Karamoja. The main donor of NUSAF2 is the World Bank through a 100 million USD loan to the Government of Uganda. The UK’s Department for International Development joined with an additional 14 million GBP, as a three-year grant to support the activities implemented by the WFP.

<sup>286</sup> Interview with regional informant number #10 (see Appendix I).

<sup>287</sup> The design and aim of the WFP/NUSAF2 programme was a ‘copy and paste’ from the well known Productive Safety Nets Programme in Ethiopia.

One labour day was defined as five hours of work, one work cycle, consisting of roughly six weeks but often changing, was defined as 13 labour days, and the compensation for one labour day was set at UGX 3,000, so that one cycle was compensated with UGX 32,400. The cash transfer was set at UGX 3,000 per labour day to equate it with the food transfer mechanism of three kg. of maize for a day's work.<sup>288</sup> In Lojom, the high percentage of people's involvement in food-for-work activities is due to the fact that beneficiaries often establish a work rotation system of close relatives to fulfil the work norms,<sup>289</sup> which results in almost everyone in the close family network, especially women, participating in the public work activities, beyond the registered family only<sup>290</sup> (see Chapter Ten). Otyang, for example, is a SAGE and food aid beneficiary and his granddaughter is a WFP/NUSAF2 beneficiary.

When I get the money I go to the market and I buy enough food to stock for the month. The money is too little to buy other things so we only buy clothes for my wife and drugs and medications for myself. For example, the money I received in October this month I spent it to treat my cough and on injections. I am not able to save any money because I like drinking...but in general I am not the only one who does not save money. To accumulate more money, my wife and I usually combine our money together though so far we are yet to save anything. When we receive cash and food at the same time we use the food from Samaritan Pursue for feeding ourselves and we use the SAGE money to buy clothes and soap. I do not have any animals and I do not have enough money to buy the animals since the animals are becoming expensive.<sup>291</sup>

Since the beginning of the programme, the provision of food aid and cash transfers were quite erratic and unpredictable in the Iriiri sub-county. As a result, what often happened is that cumulative transfers were provided to the recipients to fulfil the skipped work cycles. Interestingly, in October 2012, right after the distribution of the WFP/NUSAF2 cumulative transfer of UGX 113,000, most beneficiaries reported they had used part of the grant for animal restocking, while those who always received

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<sup>288</sup> WFP's monitoring of food prices established that 1 kg. of maize costs approximately UGX 1,000 near trading centres. Since the compensation under the food-for-work scheme was set at 3 kg. per day, what followed was that the cash compensation amounts were equivalent to the buying value of UGX 3,000.

<sup>289</sup> In order to balance out with another important livelihood programme in the region, the EU's Karamoja Livelihoods Integrated Programme, in 2012, compensation for one labour day was set at UGX 4,000.

<sup>290</sup> For instance, if one member is sick the brother or the sister get sent to work.

<sup>291</sup> Interview with Otyang Zacharia, SAGE and free food aid beneficiary, resident in Iriiri, October 20, 2012.

the set amount per cycle of UGX 32,400 rarely reported investment in animal restocking because it was considered too expensive of an investment. For instance, Sagal, a NUSAF2 beneficiary from Lojom, reported the following:

I received UGX 113,000 last week. I bought three goats that cost about UGX 100,000 from Katakwi district because I saw goats as an investment that would help me during the coming dry spell so that in case I needed money I would sell one and still get that money. I used the balance for hiring a bicycle to carry the goats and also paid taxes.<sup>292</sup>

Despite the unreliability and small amounts of transfers, the majority of public work participants in the Iriiri sub-county placed greater emphasis on the benefits gained by food and cash transfers, rather than on the benefits generated by the assets created. This is due to the type of public assets created, which were of very little benefit to the people. Opening gardens for communal crop production and construction and maintenance of small roads and earth dams have been among the major projects implemented under the WFP/NUSAF2 public work programmes. Therefore, a large percentage of the WFP/NUSAF2 budget did provide support for the development of the agricultural sector in Iriiri. However, as shown in Chapter Six, due to the low agricultural productivity of the area, gardens built through public work activities produced low harvest and were not of any benefit to the participants. Additionally, the construction of rural roads, for instance, to better connect Iriiri with the primary school of Pilas near Lojom, lasted only a few months before being washed away with the first rain.

While both individual transfers and public assets created under the WFP/NUSAF2 programme did not help the targeted families in Iriiri and Lojom 'graduate' from dependence on humanitarian assistance towards food self-sufficiency, the unintentional benefits generated by the delay of cash transfers has increased savings, which has generated higher investment opportunities and positive spill overs, such as the restocking of animals. This suggests the need for larger amounts of transfers in order to truly enable poor families to accumulate assets and escape from food insecurity.

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<sup>292</sup> Interview with group discussion number #8 (see Appendix I).

In the next section I will show how the better off class was able to exercise and reproduce its power as the ruling class by capturing any sort of aid provided in the village and locating between the aid industry and the recipients.

### 9.3 Aid patronage and social differentiation in Lojom

As previously discussed in Chapter Eight, the targeting of the WFP food aid beneficiaries in Iriiri sub-county was conducted by the IOM on behalf of the WFP, in 2010. Despite the politics of each church denomination that influenced the final outcome of the IOM beneficiaries' list, the empirical data suggests that, in Lojom, the targeting was, to some extent, appropriate; in fact, the class of the very poor is the second social class that was most supported by the food aid industry in Lojom.

Table 27 below also shows how the better off class is the most supported social class in Lojom, across the different types of aid assistance, from food aid, to food-for-work and cash-for-work, a scenario that is usually referred to in the literature as 'inclusion errors' (Sabates-Wheeler *et al.*, 2013). However, the 'inclusion errors' angle overshadows the underlining processes that reproduce the polarized distribution of aid in Lojom. In fact, any NGO providing either humanitarian or social protection programmes, before implementing an activity in Lojom, has always engaged with the leaders of the village, such as Lokwaakou and Adupinkal. Essentially, the village Big Men work as 'brokers' between the beneficiaries and the NGOs, and while the project manager from the aid agency may feel that his/her project will be more successful or sustainable because it is endorsed by the leaders of the village, Lokwaakou and Adupinkal make sure that the names of their wives and relatives are on the list of those who will receive assistance.

**Table 27: Type of aid received from the families of Lojom between 2013 and 2014 and its frequency for each social class in %**

| Social Classes          | Free Food aid | Food for Work | Cash for Work | Free cash | Seeds & Tools | Trees & Stoves | Health care assistance | Livestock | Animal drugs |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|----------------|------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| <b>Better off (N=4)</b> | 75            | 100           | 100           | 50        | 100           | 75             | 100                    | 50        | 25           |
| <b>Middle (N=13)</b>    | 15.4          | 76.9          | 76.9          | 30.8      | 53.8          | 76.9           | 46.2                   | 7.7       | 7.7          |



|                             |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |     |
|-----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|
| <b>Poor<br/>(N=56)</b>      | 41.1 | 83.9 | 42.9 | 16.1 | 64.3 | 73.2 | 46.4 | 16.1 | 3.6 |
| <b>Very Poor<br/>(N=26)</b> | 61.5 | 84.6 | 50   | 26.9 | 46.2 | 69.2 | 57.7 | 11.5 | 0   |

Source: Author's census survey

While the highest percentage of food aid beneficiaries in Lojom are among two classes, the better off and the very poor, overall, the better off class is the class that is most supported due to their leadership and political power outside and inside the village, which allows Big Men to appropriate aid for their families. Another supplementary explanation for the high percentage of aid beneficiaries among the better off class, which will be fully analysed in Chapter Ten, is that women's destitution is also present within wealthier classes and that, over time, aid workers have focused their intervention mainly on Karamojong women because they are considered the 'truly deserving' ones and more trustworthy and satisfactory aid recipients in comparison to men, especially on food/cash-for-work activities and agriculture projects. In the next section, I will discuss the structural 'side effect' in terms of gender relations, when the development industry prioritizes women's labour for aid projects.

#### 9.4 Gender relations and 'accumulation from above'

Beyond the benefits of both the food transfers and the assets created through communal labour under the WFP/NUSAF2 programme, the public work activities has generated two types of socio-economic imbalances in Lojom: one, many women did the public work on behalf of their husbands or male relatives; and two, landowners often acquired a privileged and sometimes individual access to the assets communally created through the public work activities.

The gender imbalance of the WFP/NUSAF2 programme is evident not only in Lojom but also visiting any site during public work activities across Karamoja.<sup>293</sup> Interestingly, the number of men and women formally registered under the WFP/NUSAF2 programme is equal, and yet most participants at the work sites are

<sup>293</sup> Furthermore, it is not uncommon to find pregnant women and children working in these sites, which is an aid donor's concern more than a local issue.

women.<sup>294</sup> This is due to several reasons, such as the men's generally low acceptance of the proposed work activities; cultural intra-household dynamics between men and women (see Chapter Ten) and as mentioned earlier, aid agencies' preference for female employees.

In the area of Iriiri and Lojom, WFP/NUSAF2 work is commonly perceived as women's work and the activities, which mainly consist of tending to nursery beds and large vegetable gardens, planting trees, building small dams, and rehabilitating or constructing community roads (WFP, 2011), are not seen as appropriate activities for men in the local culture. Traditionally, in Karamoja, agricultural activities pertain to the female sphere, since agriculture and *leja-leja* is considered shameful for men (see Chapter Three). In this regard, the WFP/NUSAF2 investment menu offered limited work activities which could be of interest to Karamojong men, such as livestock keeping and ox-drawn ploughing, and these were discarded by the WFP because they are outside the organization's mandate. As a result, the fulfilment of the working days in order to get either food or cash transfers is often on women's shoulders, thus aggravating the already unbalanced workload at a family level, which was already unequal, especially following the loss of animals for many, which resulted in the role of female labour becoming more central to the family's survival.

Beyond the low male participation in public work activities, due to the nature of the WFP/NUSAF2 investment menu activities, other important social and cultural factors contribute to an unequal state of affairs. As will be illustrated in the next chapter, in Iriiri and Lojom, men are generally the heads of the families; they decide who works and they give assignments to each family member accordingly, with wives often being the ones sent to carry out the public work activities.<sup>295</sup> In particular, male heads of polygynous families, having more than one wife, decide how to set the division of labour across the wives. Logono, for instance, is a NUSAF2 beneficiary living in Iriiri who reported that:

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<sup>294</sup> The EU's Karamoja Livelihoods Integrated Programme (better known as KALIP) is a similar programme implemented in Karamoja, with a smaller geographic coverage (e.g. Iriiri sub-county was not targeted) and a lower number of beneficiaries in comparison to WFP/NUSAF2. The higher participation of women in the activities such as food-for-work and cash-for-work, was also found in the recent evaluation of the Karamoja Livelihoods Integrated Programme, conducted in 2015 (KALIP, 2015).

<sup>295</sup> Interview with case study number #14 (see Appendix I).

Sometimes my husband asks me for money and we share it. The first time I received money from NUSAF2 I used it for cultivation. I bought maize. The second time I used the money to buy clothes for my children, charcoal for cooking and I bought some maize for brewing and making *kweete*, as a form of investment. I work for NUSAF2 in the garden, growing vegetables and crops, planting the trees. At the work site most of the participants are women although also few men work. There are more women working because the raids were very serious here and many men have been killed. Maybe men are not so many because they are not sure of getting paid. In general, once the man refuses to go and work then it is the woman who has to go. If women refuse to go to work then the men will beat them later.<sup>296</sup>

Most of the projects created through food or cash-for-work programmes are gardens, small dams, orchards, and so on. These common facilities need available and sometimes fertile land which is often obtained in Iriiri in exchange for adding the various land owners on the WFP/NUSAF2 beneficiary's list, regardless of their level of vulnerability or involvement in the work. This has resulted in many instances of participants not perceiving the project as something for their own benefit, a situation that is generally described in the development literature as 'lack of ownership'. For example, in many locations in the region, this situation has resulted in the landowner having free access to a cultivated garden for his own consumption only, and in participants being left out from the benefits of the asset created.<sup>297</sup> Unsurprisingly, the majority of public work participants in Iriiri placed much greater emphasis on the benefits gained by the transfers (both food and cash), than on the benefits generated by the asset created (Caravani, 2012).

The significant gender imbalance in the public work activities is partly related to the nature of the WFP/NUSAF2 investment menu, which mainly promotes agricultural activities and does not feature any activities practised by men, such as livestock keeping, ox-ploughing, or new and different activities that men may prefer. These were discarded by the WFP as beyond the organization's mandate and other activities were chosen. This is also an example of the lack of participation and empowerment of the Karamojong who do not take part in the choice of development strategies for their

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<sup>296</sup> Interview with case study number #11 (see Appendix I).

<sup>297</sup> This is a situation that I have personally experienced while I was at the WFP both in Kaabong District and in Moroto and Napak districts.

own region, which is a system that has been inherited from the 'humanitarian autocracy' period.

Under the WFP/NUSAF2 programme, implementing partners conducted participatory rural appraisal techniques to identify people's investment preferences, but these ended up being part of a more formal process that did not actually capture of the will of the people. Ultimately, public work activities increased exploitation of women's labour by male heads of families across the social classes, and created avenues for landowners to access communal assets, leaving out the targeted beneficiaries.

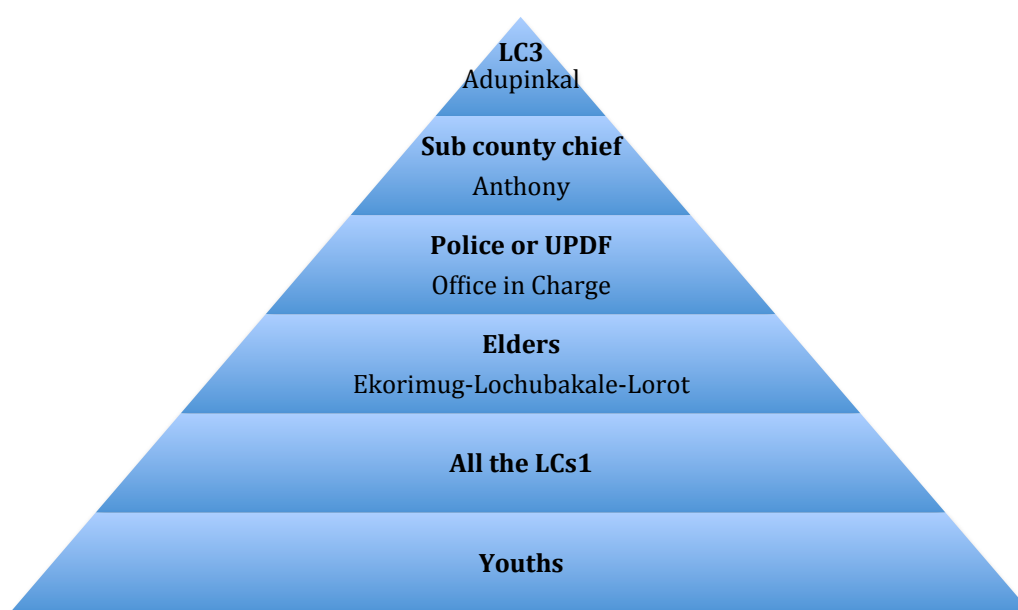
### **9.5 State patronage and social differentiation in Lojom**

Historically, aid agencies have been major actors in Karamoja and have replaced the state in the provision of public services for a long time. This situation has contributed to the development of a governance system called 'humanitarian autocracy'. However, throughout the increased incorporation of Karamoja within the Ugandan national state structures through the 'de-pastoralisation' of the region, those families who are becoming a part of the state institutions are increasingly accumulating wealth and power. As we have already seen in this chapter, social protection programmes are often taken over by the Big Men of Lojom, and the same scenario occurs with the jobs that are provided directly by the state.

By looking at the ruling classes in Lojom, both the better off and middle classes, what emerges are different ways in which the men belonging to these classes work for the local government. Adupinkal, is the *ekapolon* of Lojom and also the current elected chairman LC3 for Iriiri sub-county. As explained in Chapter Five, Adupinkal has acquired high reputation and status in Iriiri due to his past as a former and successful raider, through which he accumulated a large number of animals and family members. He is also the richest person in the village of Lojom (locally the *ekabaran*), as well as the most powerful person in the sub-county (locally the *ekapolon*). Unsurprisingly,

Adupinkal was elected LC3 chairman for the first time in 1996,<sup>298</sup> and, aside from the period of the forced disarmament between 2006 and 2011 when Emalimal was the LC3, he has been ruling the entire sub-county for almost fifteen years. In Adupinkal's case, he negotiated his access to state power through his informal leadership in Iriiri, both as the 'father of warriors' and as the wealthiest person in cattle in the sub-county. Figure 12 below shows the power hierarchy in Iriiri sub-county, according to different informants.<sup>299</sup>

**Figure 12: Actual power hierarchy in Iriiri sub-county**



Source: Author's data

This pyramid refers to the actual power structure in Iriiri sub-county, and responds to the question: who is the *ekapolon* in Iriiri sub-county? The case of Iriiri and Lojom is particular as Adupinkal is both traditionally and formally recognized as the Big Man of the sub-county.<sup>300</sup>

The LC3 is the highest political power in any sub-county in Uganda and someone in that position, such as Adupinkal in Iriiri, can order the police for an arrest if he thinks there has been some corruption or misuse of public resources, for instance,

<sup>298</sup> 'The Constitution – the country's first since 1967 – renamed the RCs as Local Councils (LCs) while also mandating direct popular elections at all levels of local government' (Green, 2008: 4).

<sup>299</sup> For more information, see methodology section in Chapter Two.

<sup>300</sup> In other villages, initiated people are not necessarily the LC1 as this role is not seen as prestigious. In Iriiri LC3s possess a considerable level of power and it would be interesting to see how many LC3s are also initiated.

by a doctor in the health centre or by a head teacher in a school.<sup>301</sup> In Lojom, in case of any dispute with another person for matters such as stealing, raping and domestic violence, most people (64%) report to government officials such as the LC1, and to Adupinkal. In terms of raiding, if someone from Lojom or outside the village steals animals from a livestock owner who resides in Lojom, the first action is to inform a government official. In Iriiri, when the local LC1 fails to address the issue and before matters are taken to the police and the court, the issues are usually discussed with Adupinkal.<sup>302</sup> Unsurprisingly, Adupinkal and his family have highly benefitted from this public appointment; for example:

Since I am the LC3 of Iriiri, I am now able to educate my family, whereas before I was not able to do it. I also build something and I can now ride the *picky* [motorbike]. Also in terms of favours, I had access to more favours than before. For example, when NGOs come to Iriiri to see the development of their projects in the field, they first come to my office; they provide allowances for me to go together to the field for monitoring and evaluation purposes. Then when the OPM provide food for the most vulnerable individuals at the sub-county level, if after distributions there is still some leftover such as *posho* [local polenta] and beans, that is for me. If among my boys/kids they went for a raid and they had a gun, even if I was the chairman, this was not enough to stop the soldiers coming to look for them [arrest them]. Conversely, if there were no illegal activities from me and my family than my animals in case of anything were not touched by the army [received privileged treatment] and eventually were returned to me.<sup>303</sup>

Adupinkal is formally married with four wives and also has two 'girls', as he refers to them. The family network related to him is wide, and his power and wealth, to some extent, also reach his relatives. His son, Lomerikaalei, is the head of the LDU in Iriiri, a unit of local armed militia that was established after the end of the disarmament to protect animals from raids (see Chapter Five). Lomerikaalei is the head of the LDU for the Iriiri sub-county, for which there are a total of 39 LDUs. Lomerikaalei used to be a raider, but, according to him, nowadays, few of the actual LDUs were famous raiders. In Lojom, he is among the middle class and through his job as an LDU, he earns 150,000 UGX per month. As he himself explained, usually the criteria for

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<sup>301</sup> Interview with case study number #1 (see Appendix 1).

<sup>302</sup> Ibid.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid.

recruiting the LDUs are based on who is capable to do the work, *alias* 'the most energetic one.' Usually, the LCs pre-screen the most suitable candidates and then the UPDF choose the best one. In his case, he was directly appointed by his father, Adupinkal, and in his opinion, he cannot be fired by his boss, who is the UPDF commander.<sup>304</sup> This is a 'text book' example on how state patronage relations intersect with kinship relations among the wealthier classes in Lojom, resulting in the social reproduction of a wealthy and powerful family.

As highlighted previously in this thesis, Adupinkal's family was composed of famous raiders among the Bokora, who currently hold public positions. While their past as raiders explains how they have been able to accumulate wealth in cattle (see Chapter Five), their current public positions of power allow the reproduction and legitimization of that 'primitive accumulation' overtime. By appointing his son Lomerikaalei as the head of LDUs, Adupinkal has managed to have official soldiers guarding and grazing his animals. In addition, having a central reference in the soldier structure allows those who are connected to Lomerikaalei, mostly his relatives, to access a network of favours and problem resolutions. In particular, they obtain favours such as the location of the kraal not too far from their villages so that during the ploughing season oxen are easily available to them.

The material advantages linked to the power of Adupinkal are 'enjoyed' not only by his extended family, but also by the inhabitants of Lojom. Between 2012 and 2013, Napak District began the construction of a dispensary next to Lojom, in the 'middle of nowhere' and without a road connecting it to the main road to Iriiri. The dispensary is located on a piece of land owned by the inhabitants of Lojom and the labour power hired for the construction of the dispensary were Adupinkal's relatives and friends from Lojom. In fact, Adupinkal wanted the dispensary to be built next to his village to help his community by giving them jobs, thus reinforcing his leadership and maintaining his control over the labour power of the poorer classes of Lojom.<sup>305</sup> Certainly, if the LC3 had been another person, the dispensary would have been built elsewhere, ideally next to the school and easily accessible to anyone from the area.<sup>306</sup>

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<sup>304</sup> Interview with case study number #8 (see Appendix 1).

<sup>305</sup> Interview with case study number #1 (see Appendix 1).

<sup>306</sup> Interview with local leader number #2 (see Appendix 1).

In Lojom poor and very poor classes are fundamentally cut-off from patronage relations as these relations mainly work between families belonging to the same social classes. Through kinship relations there are exchanges of resources and favours across different classes, but mainly between better off and middle classes. In the next section, I will show how poorer classes develop different strategies to secure their means of subsistence.

### **9.6 'Aid literacy': an important competency**

While the Karamojong are often portrayed by the state and aid agencies as affected by the 'dependency syndrome' (WFP, 2011), which is a self-evident concept often used to justify the need to stop relief and implement more developmental activities (Bradbury, 1998), an alternative reading is offered in this chapter. What is portrayed as a 'dependency' problem is described here as an important strategy employed by many Karamojong families to earn a living. The 'dependency syndrome' is a term that carries negative connotations, for it is seen as undermining any individual or communal potential initiatives by the people affected by it (Harvey and Lind, 2005).

As I discussed throughout the course of this thesis, a 'relief mentality' (cf. Bradbury, 1998) has emerged in Iriiri and Lojom, both across institutions and Bokora families<sup>307</sup> due to the chronic presence of aid agencies and the 'humanitarian autocracy' they established, as well as due to the generous support provided by the Catholic missionaries. However, given the type and quantity of aid provided, nobody in Iriiri and Lojom would ever rely only on relief or abandon their economic activities because of relief, which would result in the 'dependency syndrome'. On the contrary, families in Lojom have developed highly sophisticated strategies and skills through which they are able to exploit the provision of aid to make their lives easier. Due to this particular competency and behaviour, which can be described as a sort of 'aid literacy', the Karamojong could be considered the most literate people in Uganda. Similarly, Waller (1999) has also pointed out that,

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<sup>307</sup> See Chapter Two, in particular the section entitled 'Limitations and difficulties.'



while some have been able to escape by widening their options, shifting their assets, making use of access to external political and economic resources or simply coming to the attention of aid agencies through complete destitution – a survival strategy in itself; others have not. (Waller, 1999: 20)

The new population census conducted by UBOS in 2014 offers another insight into the consequences of ‘aid literacy’ that results in aid exploitation. In particular, the 2014 census revealed a much lower population figure in the region (990,000) than the one that had been utilised by the government and by stakeholders working in the region since the 2002 census (1,2 million) (UBOS, 2014). Besides raising the issue that for the last 15 years nearly every humanitarian and development intervention in Karamoja was planned according to an incorrect population figure, what are particularly interesting are the underlying reasons that have contributed to this remarkable mistake between planning figures and the 2014 census.

First of all, the second last census conducted by UBOS in 2002 was highly contested at the national level and Karamoja is certainly among the most difficult places to conduct a census and obtain precise information.<sup>308</sup> Nevertheless, demographic projections have been developed based on the 2002 census and the delay of the new census, which was officially due to government resource constraints, has further amplified the initial error. What is interesting is that the exaggeration of population figures is also an outcome of the particular political economy of Karamoja, whereby district offices, schools and aid beneficiaries manipulate their population figures, family sizes and composition in order to obtain more economic resources both from the state and from aid agencies. Under the school meals programme, for instance, schools receive resources both from the state under the UPE, and from the WFP, depending on the level of students’ enrolment in each school (see Chapter Eight). Another example is related to the WFP’s food security assessment, according to which 20 per cent of the entire population in Karamoja is food insecure and therefore needs to receive unconditional food aid to meet food gaps. This is a proportion of a total population figure that is eventually inflated by every district office or LC1 at the local level in order to get more food aid for their own people and families. All the people in

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<sup>308</sup> See the methodology section in Chapter Two for more information.

the region are thus, in one way or another, incentivized to inflate population figures in order to obtain more external assistance, which ultimately makes the Karamojong people and the regional institutions highly 'aid literate'.

The situation is similar at the micro level. In the village of Lojom, once or twice a month different organizations and institutions (such as UBOS, different NGOs, the local district and sub-county offices, the WFP and FAO) carry out different types of assessments. In many instances, people from Iriiri and Lojom have reported their 'tiredness' and 'boredom' with being asked personal and repetitive questions by groups of strangers, such as whether they sleep on a mattress or not, or whether they defecate in pit latrines or in the bush, and whether they wash their hands afterwards.<sup>309</sup> Nevertheless, this 'inflation' of assessments, that is understood by the people of Lojom as always connected to some sort of aid project through which they can gain benefit, results in the fact that most times respondents lie in their answers, in order to maximize the potential aid that could follow the assessment. In fact, broadly quantifying a family's valuables and own food production outcomes in a place like Lojom is a very difficult task, almost as challenging as attaining the exact number of animals owned by each family, which has historically been one of the greatest difficulties for any research team working among African pastoralists.

Not only in Lojom, but also throughout the region, people employ sophisticated stratagems to appear to any external entity – both state and aid agencies – as the 'truly deserving' or 'deserving poor' (cf. Mkandawire, 2005). In Lojom, several people have demonstrated strong experience in understanding the procedures that usually take place as part of the 'development machine', such as 'how to fake the targeting criteria' and became, for example, a WFP food aid beneficiary. The typical strategy people have used in Lojom is to change their names or parts of their names. In doing so they have been able to register many family members from the same family to any aid programme under different family names, with the aim of getting more ratio of relief aid. By changing names, they have also registered themselves to the aid programme multiple times, thus causing what is known as the phenomenon of 'double targeting'. Finally, some people have also increased their family size. All of this has

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<sup>309</sup> Interview with case study number #15 (see Appendix 1).

resulted in the increase of the number of people living in Lojom<sup>310</sup>, another micro cause that has contributed to the inflation of population figures, which have been used by state and aid agencies in Karamoja, over the past 15 years.

However, the level of 'aid literacy' is not the same across all the people of Lojom. Some people have been less aware of the mechanisms necessary to become beneficiaries of aid programmes, and have been more 'open' and naïve in responding to research teams' and NGOs' questionnaires. Though no specific data has been gathered on this in relation to social classes, it appears that the level of formal education among some family members, the different levels of exposure to urban settings – such as Iriiri – are all important contributing factors that have allowed some individuals in Lojom to have higher 'aid literacy' than others, thus being more frequently included in humanitarian aid programmes. Conversely, the most 'traditional' families – those who have less access to Iriiri centre and lower levels of formal education – have certainly been the most penalized.

In conclusion, there is a strong correlation between a village's level of incorporation within towns and more 'modern life', and the levels of 'aid literacy'. Historically, remote villages are more often aid neglected so there are more people who are 'aid illiterate', resulting in behaviours towards external interventions being extremely different. In such places, humanitarian workers will find their work much easier in comparison to places like Iriiri and Lojom.

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<sup>310</sup> For example, according to the Iriiri sub-county office in Lojom there is a population of 1,529 individuals whereas according to my census the population is of 708 individuals.

## Conclusion

Historically, humanitarian aid and the national state in Karamoja have provided jobs in formal power structures to those Karamojong who first acquired formal education. The Bokora section, having been the first to lose large numbers of herds and to resettle in more fertile areas – which were places ‘controlled’ by missionaries and relief agencies – were among the first Karamojong to acquire formal education, which proved an important competency to join the political administrative class. In turn, this resulted in the formation of a local elite that has increasingly acquired power as the process of ‘de-pastoralisation’ has moved forward. This general narrative is enriched by the cases of successful ex-raiders who used their status and reputation to access power on a state level, as a way to formally legitimate their power and reproduce their wealth over time.

Alongside job offers in the formal political power sector, religious institutions and aid agencies, followed by the national state, have, in different ways, influenced the Karamojong generational livelihood choices, mainly, through the promotion of formal education and settled farming. As illustrated throughout this thesis, these competencies have actually trapped most families in Lojom in low food production and large unemployment rates in the formal sector, to the point that many families have resumed off farm activities in order to earn a living.

The historical process of ‘de-pastoralisation’ was resisted by the Bokora until they owned rifles, but as soon as warriors were disarmed by the UPDF, the path of ‘de-pastoralisation’ was ultimately concluded, and many families living outside the trading of natural resources, wage labour and social protection programmes have emerged in Iriiri and Lojom. Due to the way in which humanitarian and social protection programmes are currently conceived by state and aid agencies, these programmes can only reproduce the material and social conditions that contribute to maintain the *status quo*, which includes a majority of the people living in Lojom being trapped in poverty and chronic food insecurity.

In terms of gender relations, the current public work programmes reinforce and reproduce patriarchal relations that result in welfare inequality within the same family, between wives and husbands. On the other hand, the provision of humanitarian and

social protection programmes are necessary for the poorer classes in Lojom to mitigate the consequences of 'de-pastoralisation', such as the increase of social differentiation and reduced vertical social mobility. However, the type of assistance currently provided does not consent any accumulation of assets or savings for poorer classes to 'graduate' from a condition of chronic poverty and food insecurity to food self-sufficiency. At the same time, through different forms of state and aid patronage relations, these institutions actually represent some of the drivers that allow Big Men to reproduce and accumulate new wealth. In conclusion, following the Bokora's 'de-pastoralisation' and destitution, a 'humanitarian autocracy' emerged as a governance system in a *vacuum* of state and local power. The people of Iriiri and Lojom have been actively taking part in this governance system through its systematic exploitation. The analytical lens I have provided in this chapter thus offers a counter-narrative to the one of 'dependency syndrome' usually applied to the Karimojong.

## **10. Intra-Households Dynamics and Social Relations**

## Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to unfold the causes of social differentiation within families, between wives and husbands, and the drivers that reproduce intra-household inequality over time.

Throughout the course of this thesis what has been demonstrated is that, over the time span of two generations, families living in Lojom have changed their modes of production from transhumant agro-pastoralism to settled 'marginal farming', town-based work, and exploitation of humanitarian aid. Despite the changes that have occurred in the modes of production, the 'lineage mode of production' – that is, every individual's aim of 'accumulating social dependants rather than goods' (Hodgson, 1999: 43) – continues to persist in Lojom, as per tradition, and this is clear from looking at the relatively high number of polygynous families. While 'lineage modes of production' were an important feature of the traditional Karamojong economy, that resulted in social mobility and wealth redistribution (see Chapters Three and Five), following the historical process of 'de-pastoralisation', this mode of production has resulted in rather exploitative relations of husbands over wives, especially amongst wealthier classes.

This chapter concludes by illustrating the intersection, in the social division of labour, between patriarchal, class, patronage and kinship relations, and the ways in which these social structures cause and reproduce inequality within families, between husband and wives.

## 10.1 Patriarchy and Social Values

### 10.1.1 Patriarchy and social values

Through the use of different examples, throughout the course of this thesis, I have illustrated how social differentiation in Lojom exists across families and also within families, between husbands and wives. In the literature on pastoralism, there is an agreement on how current gender relations amongst pastoralists in East Africa are patriarchal, and there is an open debate on whether pre-colonial pastoral societies were more or less patriarchal, in comparison to the present (see Chapter One). Whether pre-colonial Karamojong society was patriarchal or not is difficult to establish. In most ethnographic sources on Karamoja, written between the 1950s and 1970s (see, for instance, Gulliver, 1955; Dyson-Hudson, 1966; Lamphear, 1976), one rarely finds the term ‘patriarchy’ explicitly used, though descriptions of social relations are reported very much along these lines, as in the cases of women’s rights over and access to their animals and children:

She may be given a special cow or ox by her father [...] when she leaves his homestead for good. But her husband can take it and dispose of it should the need arise [...]. She may protest but she cannot prevent it. “Her husband would beat her”. (Gulliver, 1955: 61)

The prime, extrinsic features of legal marriage are the man’s sexual monopoly over his wife and authority over her children. (Gulliver, 1955: 228)

Certainly, the historical process of the Bokora’s ‘de-pastoralisation’ has resulted in a different kind of social division of labour between wives and husbands, with cases in Iriiri and Lojom of highly different welfare levels and access to socio-economic opportunities and resources. The exploitative nature of the social relations of production is highlighted by the fact that in Lojom, husbands – especially of wealthier classes – do not produce their own food and are all engaged in the ‘salaried economy’ (cf. Vincent, 1974). The type of occupations conducted by these Big Men are less heavy in terms of labour and highly differentiated compared to those of their wives, and they are more exposed to the changes and opportunities brought in by ‘modernization’. Not surprisingly, these Big Men have a higher level of formal education, have some



knowledge of English, may drive a motorcycle, dress in western garb and are never engaged in *leja-leja*: all features that do not apply to their wives. Throughout this thesis, I have illustrated several cases of husbands both among the better off and middle classes who: own large herds, (see Chapter Five); have access to tractors or ox-ploughs (see Chapter Six); run a shop in Iriiri and sleep in permanent homes, while their wives have no property rights over these assets and activities, live in villages, and work for their husbands' private businesses without receiving any payment (see Chapter Seven). On the other hand, in poor and very poor classes, men and women have similar levels of welfare, conduct similar occupations (such as *leja-leja*), and essentially share property rights over the same assets.

These uneven social relations in Iriiri are shaped and reproduced by ideologies which are part of the traditional culture and also promoted by the Catholic Church, which endorses patriarchal relations in the day-to-day relation with the congregates. Almost every Sunday, for instance, the Catholic priest of Iriiri during the homily<sup>311</sup> preaches to the congregates that polygamy is a sin, while other discourses are along the lines of, 'a wife should respect and love her husband', she should be a 'helper, stronger and hardworking', and never the other way round. Despite the fact that the Iriiri Catholic parish is attended mostly by women and children from rural villages (see Chapter Eight), they all sit in the back of the parish or just outside it, while few men who attend the mass have the privileged position to sit in the front, almost next to the priest. The structure (or temporal power) of the Catholic Church in Karamoja is itself highly patriarchal, with the most powerful positions occupied by men only, such as those of bishops, priests and catechists. This is an important point because during informal conversations I had with several men throughout the entire region, these examples are oftentimes brought up to explain why men and women are involved in different occupations. In Lojom, it is not uncommon to hear the phrase *ereitai ngaberu*, literally meaning, 'women are subordinated to men by nature', used as an answer to the question of why women work harder than men. Ultimately, such views reproduce and justify relations of patriarchy within and outside families.

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<sup>311</sup> While the readings during the mass are similar to those, for example, done in Italy, what changes is the homily. During the homily the priest in Iriiri clearly refers to Apostle Paul writings that is a source for a theological debate on the historical role of women in Christianity.

Patriarchy influences the social division of labour within the family with different impacts on production, accumulation and social reproduction. In Lojom and Iriiri, male heads appear as family ‘managers’, making economic decisions, such as allocating their family members as their own labour power, transferring assets, and doing other financial activities, depending on their needs. In fact, during discussions with male heads of families, it is not uncommon to hear their explanations as to how they decide where to assign responsibilities among their family members. Ekorimoug, for instance, is a Big Man, a prominent elder from Iriiri and head of an extended family. During his life, he decided to send some children to school, have others be employed in the butcheries in Iriiri, and others graze his herd. As he himself has pointed out, ‘depending on the character of the wives, I decide whether to have all my wives in one home, (*ere/ekal*), or to spread them in different homes or villages (*manyatta*).’<sup>312</sup> In his opinion he takes the most efficient decisions to increase the overall welfare of his extended family, acting as a sort of a ‘benevolent dictator’ (cf. Devereux, 2006).<sup>313</sup> His decisions have had important repercussions in the lives of each individual family member, and while some of his sons were able to attend school, all of his daughters have never gone to school.

Regardless of NGOs’ and WFP efforts to provide extra incentives to increase girls school attendance, (such as the ‘girls taking home ratio’ policy), the majority of students in the schools of Iriiri continue to be males. There are plenty of examples in Karamoja of women and men unevenly accessing the relatively ‘new opportunities’ provided by the state and aid agencies. Again, most of the LC1, LC3 and LC5 are men. Equally, project managers and NGOs staff in the field are mainly men. As we will see in the course of this chapter, women in Lojom constitute the bulk of the labour force, but their possibilities to cover higher roles in the chain of production, or to access the opportunities provided by the state and aid agencies are more circumscribed than for men.

While the diverse combinations of the means of production (see Chapter Six) and different locations (urban/rural) (see Chapter Seven) are important factors for understanding the uneven level of wealth across the different social classes in Lojom,

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<sup>312</sup> Interview with case study number #5 (see Appendix I).

<sup>313</sup> Ibid.

these factors do not reveal the complex social structures that operate within families, which fundamentally differentiate men and women in their rights and their access and control over labour, expenditures and income (and means of production). As Guyer and Peters (1987) suggest,

[...] the social relations of production [...] have still to be understood through the practices and ideologies of descent and inheritance, marriage and bridewealth, residence and seniority. (Guyer and Peters, 1987: 200)

To this end, there have been attempts to incorporate the lineage, the division of labour by sex, internal resource control within polygynous domestic arrangements [...] into an elaborated model of the household. (Guyer and Peters, 1987: 200-201)

The moral and social systems that operate in Iriiri and Lojom reproduce the uneven power relations between wives and husbands. The process of the Bokora's 'de-pastoralisation' has resulted in an increasing social differentiation, with the society no longer stratified only on different age-classes, as it traditionally used to be. Presently, being an elder is no longer synonymous with wealth and power as it used to be (see Chapter Four); the wealthier classes in Lojom are formed by different people regardless of their age, and there are elders in the poor classes. What is in continuity with the past is the rule of fathers/husbands being predominant in the family, both politically and economically.

### **10.1.2 Social classes and family arrangements**

Throughout this thesis, different types of family arrangements have been analysed as key factors in examining the causes and drivers of social differentiation, in the village of Lojom. During the group discussions I conducted,<sup>314</sup> the number of wives men marry was not considered a criterion to define wealth; however, by correlating the wealth ranking exercise with the census data of the same sample (see Chapter Four), a strong correlation clearly emerged. Similarly, the positive relationship between greater wealth and larger family size has been a major observation across both pastoral and agricultural contexts (see, for example, Fratkin, 1989; Whitehead, 2004). Table 28

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<sup>314</sup> Three group discussions for the wealth ranking exercise with 10 people from Lojom.

below clearly shows the positive correlation between wealth and polygynous families in Lojom.

**Table 28: Correlation between social classes and different family arrangements**

| Social Classes              | % of families who are polygynous | % of families who are mono-nuclear |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Better off<br/>(N=4)</b> | 100                              | 0                                  |
| <b>Middle<br/>(N=13)</b>    | 46.2                             | 7.7                                |
| <b>Poor<br/>(N=56)</b>      | 32.1                             | 55.4                               |
| <b>Very poor<br/>(N=26)</b> | 23.1                             | 38.5                               |

Source: Author's census survey

Traditionally, a man in Karamoja being able to marry many wives with large payments of bridewealth, shows signs of both wealth and power (Dyson-Hudson, 1970). This is due to the fact that male heads of polygynous families (locally known as *ekek*<sup>315</sup>) show that the husband is able to afford several payments of bridewealth, and the higher the payments, the more extended the family network that is formed, and the wider the family head's connections; something that is useful in times of need, and ultimately sanctions male power and influence over multiple individuals (see Chapter Three).

Interestingly, in Lojom, this traditional understanding of both male and family wealth and power, that shapes the 'lineage mode of production', persists despite the major changes that have occurred. A mono-nuclear family is considered 'inferior' (locally named as *apeican*, literally 'one hand' or 'one donkey')<sup>316</sup> and these families mostly belong to the poor and very poor classes. Conversely, polygynous families – despite the fact that they have more 'mouths to feed' – are in higher percentages in the better off and middle classes.

While the social prestige or symbolic status attributed to those men who have been able to marry many wives has stayed intact overtime (in fact, being able to marry more than one wife and for a wife to be paid for in full bridewealth is still a highly

<sup>315</sup> *Ekek* 'means a door: they are the people who came from one door. It is this unit which is liable to receive or to pay blood-money or bride-price' (Lawrance, 1953: 244).

<sup>316</sup> Interview with regional leader number #2 (see Appendix I).

desirable goal), the ways in which male-heads of polygynous families use family labour for productive activities has significantly changed.

Before the beginning of the disarmament exercise in the early 2000s, in Lojom, persistently stockless families were few and some families still owned relatively large numbers of animals (see Chapter Five). At that time, the control over male labour was important, mainly for maintaining and protecting herds, and specifically for herding the animals to relatively distant grazing areas, for protecting them against other raiders, and for conducting successful raids. Female labour, on the other hand, was dedicated to the domestic economy and small agricultural activities in permanent settlements (see Chapter Three). During the disarmament time, women also played a major role in 'hiding the rifles of their men relatives' (a practice locally known as *kimuk ekile*).

Presently, the control over female labour by male-heads of families is a key factor for them to realize individual profits through an array of highly intensive labour activities, such as cultivating many acres of land, maintaining and/or acquiring land rights through wives' settlements in different villages (see Chapter Six), brewing and selling local beer, making and selling charcoal (see Chapter Seven), and lastly, undertaking public work activities sponsored by aid agencies and becoming beneficiaries of food or cash-for-work projects (see Chapter Nine). The men who are able to manage their extended families in this way in Lojom do not need to work for simple reproduction and have more free time to seek economic surplus in towns, among other things (see Chapter Seven). While wives of rich men are identified by other people living in Lojom as wealthier than others, in the next section, I will highlight the more symbolic nature of this social differentiation.

As previously discussed in Chapter Six, male heads of polygynous families mostly live in Iriiri trading centre, with their wives and children living in Lojom or in other rural villages. Typically, in polygynous families, each wife forms a 'sub-family unit'<sup>317</sup> (or *ekal*) with her own children, with each wife being responsible for the

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<sup>317</sup> The 'sub family unit' presented here is considered by UBOS, district offices in Karamoja and the WFP, as the equivalent definition adopted for household (see Chapter Two). In my definition, each 'sub family unit' has a set of full brothers and sisters – termed 'yard' by Gulliver (1955) – that, within polygynous families, generate relations of half brothers and sisters, across the sub family units. Overall, sisters have

cultivation of a plot of land, usually between two and three acres, through which she has to sustain her own children's basic shelter and food needs.<sup>318</sup> In Lojom, the aim of any male head of a polygynous family is to make all of his 'sub-family units' as economically independent as possible, as well as make them sources of free labour power for economic, profit-driven initiatives. In other pastoral areas in East Africa, each 'sub-family' or 'sub-household' unit is economically too independent to be considered as one unit (Brockington, 2001). On the contrary although the aim of any male head of polygynous family is to render each of his wives and children as economically independent as possible (see Chapter Seven), husbands exercise power over their wives' labour. Though in somewhat different terms, this is what used to happen also before 'de-pastoralisation' (at least among the Jie), when each husband allocated enough livestock to his wives to secure her and her children the means of subsistence (Gulliver, 1955; Lamphear, 1976). It continues to be true in the present day, whereby the ultimate owner and controller of major economic activities remains the husband.

On the other hand, marrying many women is a necessary though insufficient condition for any man to be counted among the individuals that form the ruling classes of Lojom. In fact, the highest number of better off and middle classes families are polygynous. As will be shown in the next section, other factors play an important role in being part of the ruling class, such as the male heads' leadership over the 'sub-family units' and the individual personality and class background of each wife he is married to.

### **10.1.3 Lokwaakou's case study**

Lokwaakou is another Big Man and he is part of the class of the better off in Lojom. Throughout the course of his life he married four wives to both enhance his social prestige and have access to a larger family network from which to gain free labour power. According to him, it has been a sensible investment to pay bridewealth for four wives, and it has been challenging to 'manage' four wives with their own particular

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relatively less importance in this analysis of family structure because, at some point in time, they all leave their original family and join another family, while men do not leave their mothers (Gulliver, 1955).

<sup>318</sup> Interview with regional leader number #2 (see Appendix I).

characters and different needs, but through these marriages he has acquired material and symbolic advantages. In fact, by employing several family members as free labour in his gardens, Lokwaakou has been able to cultivate many acres of land, making the production of crops one of his major sources of income, especially during good years of rainfall. According to his own estimations, in 2013, due to the overall poor agricultural season in the area (see Chapter Six), Lokwaakou sold only 15 per cent of his harvest, whereas 85 per cent was consumed by his extended family. In 2014, the agricultural season was slightly better and Lokwaakou was able to sell 22 per cent of the harvest, while 78 per cent was consumed by his family.<sup>319</sup> These outcomes are relatively high in comparison to other families in Lojom, who, in 2013, were, for the most part, near to total crop failure (ibid.).

Lokwaakou also employs his wives in off-farm activities, such as the production and trading of *kweete*. The feature of Lokwaakou as a ‘manager’ of his extended family is visible in the way in which he allocates labour to his four wives across time and space. One of his wives, Nasuru lives in Moroto, and Lokwaakou calls her to Lojom whenever he needs her labour, such as clearing the fields and planting/sowing and harvesting during the different agricultural seasons.

Traditionally, (up until the 1980s), wives of polygynous families all lived in the same *ere/manyatta*<sup>320</sup> home of their husband, and every wife had her own *ekal*,<sup>321</sup> whereas in Lojom, presently, the majority (79.4%) of polygynous families have at least one wife living outside the village (see Chapter Four). Overall, male heads of polygynous families now reside in multiple places, both in towns and villages, with wives referring to them as, ‘they go and come back’, whereas wives live in the village, joining their husbands on a seasonal basis.

To some extent, this has always been the case in Karamoja, as men were traditionally transhumant, moving between permanent settlements and stock camps with their herds, while women were at home with their children, the elderly, and some animal stock (see Chapter Three). Despite the process of ‘de-pastoralisation’, the

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<sup>319</sup> Interview with case study number #2 (see Appendix I).

<sup>320</sup> Interview with regional informant number #3 (see Appendix I).

<sup>321</sup> Traditionally full brothers used to also live together in the same *ere* due to the possession of one common herd that kept them together (Gulliver, 1955). Again, the loss of animals suggests the reduced interests in and usefulness for full brothers living together.

transhumant lifestyle continues to be maintained by male heads of polygynous families, now more for economic diversification than for grazing the herd. As already pointed out in Chapter Seven, it seems that towns have replaced what used to be the *kraals* for men.

Overall, all of Lokwaakou's wives 'work under him', though every wife and child form four different 'sub-family units', with each wife responsible for a plot of land through which she has to sustain her children's basic needs for shelter and food. The four 'sub-family units' that form Lokwaakou's extended family are almost entirely economic independent units, under Lokwaakou's supervision. Nevertheless, there are frequent socio-economic exchanges in both directions between each family sub-unit and Lokwaakou. For example, if Lokwaakou needs some money or extra agricultural produce, he asks his wives, and, in case of particular need or unforeseen events, he may financially support his wives. However, generally, the wives' labour is used both for the subsistence of each 'sub-family unit', as well as for Lokwaakou's individual profits.

Another feature that emerges from Lokwaakou's life history is the importance of his personal success due to the family background of the wives he has married. His last wife, for instance, is Logiela, one of the daughters of Lochubakale (see Chapter Five), an important elder and ex-warrior from Napeilet village. As Lokwaakou described: 'I like her but more especially she is Lochubakale's daughter', thus highlighting the importance for him of being affiliated with Lochubakale's family. In fact, by becoming the son-in-law of Lochubakale he has enhanced his position in the area of Iriiri and Lojom, embracing another important family with an extended social network that he did not have access to before his marriage with Logiela. Overall, in places like Lojom and Iriiri, the type and quantity of connections which a person has access to are important factors both to make a living and to increase rights and control over assets and privileges that others will not be able to access.<sup>322</sup>

As previously discussed in Chapter Four, the ruling class of Lojom is formed by a cluster of relatives, which displays high barriers of entry, that can mostly be overcome with marriage. For example, as a result of the marriage with Logiela, more people

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<sup>322</sup> Interview with local leader number #2 (see Appendix I).



know Lokwaakou and everyone knows that he is now affiliated to an important family, which entail access to certain opportunities for him that can eventually help him accumulate new wealth. In the kraal, for example, he now keeps his cattle with those of Lochubakale, which are together with those of Adupinkal, and they are all highly protected and well grazed by the LDUs (see Chapter Five). In terms of social prestige, the fact that Lokwaakou married one of the daughters of Lochubakale gave him other advantages as well. During work in Lokwaakou's gardens, many of Lochubakale's family members (or womenfolk) contribute freely to the agricultural work in exchange for beer as a sign of gratitude.

In summary, by marrying four wives with bridewealth (one of whom is from an important family), by living in Iriiri centre and spreading the 'sub-family units' in different locations, and by exploiting the labour of his wives for personal gains, Lokwaakou has been able to reproduce and increase his personal wealth and power overtime.

The welfare across Lokwaakou's different 'sub-family units' seems to be quite even, both according to him and his wives. This is a finding that is partially substantiated by the relatively high percentage of total own food production that is consumed by the whole extended family *vis-à-vis* what has been sold at the market. This is an important finding given the higher control that Lokwaakou exercises on income, expenditure and labour, in comparison to his wives.

Lokwaakou's story is important for understanding the ways in which class differentiation, patriarchy and kinship interplay in reproducing his wealth. The next section analyses polygynous families with differences of welfare across the 'sub-family units' of the same family.

## 10.2 Intra-household Relations

### 10.2.1 Inequality among 'sub-family units'

Despite the fact that the better off class in Lojom is made up of polygynous families, this does not necessarily entail that all the 'sub-family units' that form these families have access to the same level of welfare. One example of this is the polygynous family of Lonyangaluk, who was identified as belonging to the better off class (see Chapter Four). Two of his wives are perceived by the inhabitants of Lojom as having different levels of welfare. In the group discussions I conducted, what emerged was that Lakawa was better off compared to her co-wife because she had many daughters and received substantial bridewealth, while the co-wife Koliyang only had sons.<sup>323</sup> As per tradition, a small part of the bridewealth is paid to the mother – generally one good cow<sup>324</sup> – therefore, in this case, the social differentiation between wives under the same polygynous family is explained and justified as per tradition. However, traditional values do not explain the differences in the composition of each 'sub-family unit' (e.g. daughters or sons), resulting in social differentiation among 'sub-family units', especially in the long run, since brothers and half-brothers also get a portion of their sisters' bridewealth when they get married. Given the loss of animals and the consequent decrease in the bridewealth price that has been paid in Lojom since the 1980s (see Chapter Five), the importance of bridewealth as an explanation for the different levels of wealth among 'sub-family units' is diminishing.

Another example of intra-household inequality is present in Lokitare's family. He is from the village of Losikait (next to Lojom) was once a full time herder, and at the time of my field research, he was employed as field staff for an NGO in Iriiri. He explained why his two 'sub-families' have different levels of welfare<sup>325</sup>:

A while ago the family of my first wife contributed something to her and she handled this capital properly and also, at the time of my first wife, I was richer in comparison to the time when I got the second wife. Currently, I cannot give wealth across the two families. Another difference is the mismanagement of properties and items that I've given to the second wife,

<sup>323</sup> Interview with group discussions number #10 (see Appendix I).

<sup>324</sup> Interview with regional leader number #2 (see Appendix I).

<sup>325</sup> Interview with case study number #3 (see Appendix I).

that has resulted in more poverty to this family. Then it is difficult for me to give her again other resources. However, I will continue to see their performances and how I can support them.

The example of Lokitare is interesting also because, while he is a NGO worker, able to speak English and holding a formal job contract, a monthly salary, paid holidays, insurance and so on, his two wives do *leja-leja*, live in the village and only speak *Ngakaramojong*. This case study shows the underlying reasons for the differences in welfare among the two 'sub-family units', that is mainly based on the competency (judged by Lokitare) of each wife in handling different economic resources, the central role Lokitare and his authority as the 'manager' of the two 'sub-family units', and his higher welfare compared to his two wives.

Traditionally, in the allocation of resources and assets from the husband to the wives there was no distinction between wives, not even one based on seniority (Gulliver, 1955). Depending on how 'good and cordial' the relationships were between each co-wife (and sub-family unit), there were different levels of sharing and cooperation in terms of food and labour (ibid.). As mentioned previously, presently, co-wives in Lojom live in different *ere* and/or villages, and solidarity and cooperation among kinswomen does not appear to be a strong feature anymore. In more subjective terms, one of the major understandings of what women perceive to be inequality is based on the different ways in which the husband in a polygynous family may 'treat' the different co-wives. These uneven relationships are frequent 'domains of contestation' (cf. Ferguson, 1990).

Welfare differences between 'sub-family units' from the same polygynous families also exist in terms of location (urban-rural) (see Chapter Seven), levels of formal education, and how each unit earns a living. Between husband and wives, between 'sub-family units' of the same extended family, and within them among half-brothers, there are differences in terms of welfare, livelihoods and formal education. This also highlights the importance of the 'individual' as a unit of socio-economic analysis. However, as will be shown at the end of this chapter, these nuanced differentiations within extended families are manipulated by the different social classes.

### 10.2.2 Inheritance: an example of systematic gender exploitation

Traditionally, the Karamojong practise a patrilineal system of inheritance that includes 'social dependents' such as wives, and material assets in the form of head of cattle and smallstock. This system entailed that, when a husband died, his wife/wives was/were passed on to his elder brother (a practise called *levirate*), whereas the material assets were inherited by his oldest son, depending on whether or not he was already married (Gulliver, 1955). If the son was married, he inherited all of his father's assets and properties, and among brothers, the share of the father's assets was affected by age, highlighting the power and influence of the elder brother over the younger ones. In the case of none of the sons being married, wives and assets were inherited by the father's brother.<sup>326</sup>

The reasons for the exclusion of wives and daughters from a father's inheritance was traditionally based on three main reasons: firstly, inheritance was mainly in the form of animals, which were customarily a man's responsibility, in terms of grazing and protection from enemies (see Chapter Three); secondly, sons had to pay the full bridewealth in order to create their own families so they needed their father's herd; thirdly, as soon as women got married, they left their original family and embraced the husband's family with his herd.<sup>327</sup>

Presently, while the phenomenon of *levirate* is diminishing, in Lojom the patrilineal system of inheritance still operates, and reproduces male power and wealth. The payment of a full bridewealth rarely happens except among the wealthiest (see Chapter Five), and inheritance is no longer based only on livestock as it was in the past, but continues to follow the same patrilineal path. Therefore, the traditional justification (or explanation), according to which the entire inheritance has to be passed on to male members of the family, no longer appears reasonable. The ways in which inheritance continues to be organized along patrilineal paths in Lojom, sheds light on the organization of generational inequality between women and men.

While the presence of female-headed families in Lojom is a sign of a changing inheritance system, from which widows continue to still often be excluded, the ways in

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<sup>326</sup> Interview with case study number #16 (see Appendix I).

<sup>327</sup> Ibid.

which assets are passed across generations between full-brothers, shows patrilineal dynamics continuing as they always have (Dahl, 1987).

Despite structural changes, such as the commodification of the economy and new modes of production based on different economic activities, in Lojom, both inheritance and kinship affiliations are still patrilineal. Therefore, inheritance is another moment in which the patriarchal morality continues to operate, making uneven social relations across generations and among family members, between brothers and sisters, clearly emerge.

### 10.2.3 Female-headed families

Most of the families living in Lojom are a combination of mono-nuclear and polygynous male-headed families, with a minority of female-headed families. Forty two per cent of families are mono-nuclear, 34 per cent are polygynous, and 24 per cent are female-headed families (see Chapter Four); though some of the mono-nuclear and female-headed families were at some point in time polygynous families.<sup>328</sup> Certainly, until two generations ago, any 'mature' family in Karamoja was only polygynous, and mono-nuclear families existed only until husbands were able to marry an additional wife (Gulliver, 1955).

The relatively high number of female-headed families in Lojom is a new development since, traditionally, widows in Karamoja were 'inherited' – sometimes with the husbands' assets, depending on whether or not the eldest son was married already – by the family of the husband's brother. This phenomenon is very common in many parts of Africa (Mkutu, 2008), where marriage is seen as a union of two families, rather than two individuals only. The presence of this cultural feature in Karamoja made the existence of female-headed families fundamentally impossible, since a widow and her children were always merged with another agnatic family (see Chapter Three).<sup>329</sup> In Lojom, the fact that cases of *levirate* are diminishing and that the

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<sup>328</sup> Unfortunately, I did not collect quantitative data on the exact number of ex-polygynous families in Lojom.

<sup>329</sup> With the expansion of HIV in Karamoja, as a result of the militarization of the region during the disarmament exercise, *levirate* has fostered the spreading of the virus among family members. For instance, when a husband died of HIV, his brother inherited his wife and also contracted the virus. According to some informants, this is one of the reasons for the diminishing cases of *levirate*.

presence of permanent female-headed families exists, stands testimony to a new form of family development.

Overall, among the Bokora, a number of women became widows due to the deaths of their husbands, mainly during armed raiding and disarmament exercises. In addition, some families became female-headed because they have been ‘abandoned’ by their husbands who had multiple wives, or because, on their own initiative, they have decided to leave their un-wealthy husbands in central Karamoja and move to Lojom to earn a living (see Chapter Six).

Interestingly, the existence of female-headed families in a permanent status, show both a new type of family as well as the presence of female-headed families that are not subordinated to or in patriarchal relationships with their husbands anymore. These families experience dynamics inherent to class relations ‘only’ in terms of labour exploitation, outside of the family. In fact, depending on the classes female-headed families belong to, the level of destitution and exploitation varies sensibly. While none of the families in the class of the better off is female-headed, the highest percentage is included in the middle class (46.2%).

**Table 29: Correlation between social classes and female-headed families**

| Social Classes      | % of families who are female-headed |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Better off<br>(N=4) | 0                                   |
| Middle<br>(N=13)    | 46.2                                |
| Poor<br>(N=56)      | 12.5                                |
| Very poor<br>(N=26) | 38.5                                |

Source: Author’s census survey

While the highest percentage of female-headed families is in the middle class, in absolute terms, the highest number of female-headed families is in the class of the very poor. This confirms the commonly held view that portrays widows as the most vulnerable family members. Widows are often relatively old for Karamoja standards (46.8 years on average), and since they have not been inherited by younger and stronger families of relatives, they have been identified as belonging to the class of very poor. As a matter of fact, they do not have the strength to work the land to

produce food (in 2013 they cultivated only 0.6 acres) or to work as a *leja-leja* for someone else or in public work programmes, therefore their survival it is always at risk.

Furthermore, there is another group of female-headed families who were at some point in time part of rich polygynous families and once they got separated or became widows they have been surprisingly 'downgraded' only to the middle class. Despite the fact that female-headed families in the middle class are headed by widows who are no longer with their rich husbands, they have still been considered by the people of Lojom as belonging to a relatively high class. This is because they have inherited a large and profitable social network from their rich husbands, which helps them to make a living. In a way, their past *status* as wives of local *ekapolon* (rich *pater familias*) still persists in Lojom, often only through 'symbolic relations' rather than material wealth.

Namilo<sup>330</sup>, is an interesting case of one of the female family heads, identified as belonging to the 'middle class'. She is a widow, late wife of Adupinkal's brother, the *ekapolon* of Iriiri and Lojom. According to Namilo, her husband Apakorikau was a rich livestock owner whose herd was composed of 400 cows and 200 goats. Apakorikau had a polygynous family of four wives (six for a period of time) and, unsurprisingly, in 1980, Namilo was paid with a large bridewealth, between 55 and 60 cows, which was a sign of her husband's wealth as well as of the wide family network possessed by the bride, that, through the marriage and the exchange of animals, tied the two families together. Presently, Namilo does not own any animals, neither cattle nor small stock, she is completely illiterate and does not own any property in Iriiri centre, but only two semi-permanent houses in Lojom. Unfortunately, due to animals trespassing and destroying her plot of land, the two acres of land she cultivated in 2013 in a fertile spot with a permanent water source in the vicinity, resulted in zero crop harvested during the entire year. Nevertheless, both her and her children ate well that year, three times a day, and this is due to the fact that she has access to a wide network of close relatives, most of whom live in Lojom, who provided her with some food support during 2013 and 2014. In addition, she is also a beneficiary of both food and cash-for-work programmes, through which she was able to fill her food gaps.

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<sup>330</sup> Interview with case study number #4 (see Appendix I).

Hence, the middle class can be divided into two sub-classes formed by polygynous families and female-headed families. While the polygynous families are more similar to the better off class in terms of assets (see Table 30) and access to means of production, thus acting as the ‘rural capitalists’, the female-headed families, outside of their large social networks from which they get access to food, in agrarian relations continue to act more as ‘rural peasants’.

**Table 30: Middle class characteristics between female-headed families and polygynous families<sup>331</sup>**

| Middle Class                       |                        |                                 |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Characteristics                    | Female-headed families | Polygynous male-headed families |
| Number of cattle owned             | 1.2                    | 6.3                             |
| Number of small stock owned        | 2.2                    | 4.5                             |
| Number of acres of land owned      | 5                      | 16.3                            |
| Number of acres cultivated in 2013 | 2.4                    | 3.5                             |
| Sorghum harvested in 2013 in Kg    | 51.8                   | 132.7                           |
| Number of houses owned             | 2.7                    | 4.8                             |
| Average education                  | 1.2                    | 1.1                             |
| Number of child meals a day        | 2.3                    | 2.7                             |

Source: Author’s census survey

The emergence of female-headed families as stable types of families across social classes is also a sign of the loss of traditional mechanisms of solidarity that used to be important to protect vulnerable widows. At the same time, the decreasing cases of *levirate* in Lojom generally leave female-heads of families more free to both control their own labour power and the income earned from alternative means of social reproduction. Despite this ‘freedom’ from patriarchal relations on a family level, in the middle class, female-heads of families’ ownership of assets and their relations of production are lower compared to polygynous male-headed families. In the next section I will explain the intersection of patriarchy relations with class dynamics.

## Conclusion

Following the historical process of the Bokora’s ‘de-pastoralisation’, social relations of production between wives and husbands became more uneven. Traditionally, there was a clear gendered social division of labour, which shifted following the ‘livestock

<sup>331</sup> The middle class includes also one mononuclear male-headed family that was not included in Table 28.



dispossession'. Without livestock production, women's role within the family became more central to secure the family's subsistence, with a growing reliance of income from off-farm activities and *leja-leja*. These economic activities were considered a stigma for men in the local culture, and without any alternatives for men the result was that wives' workloads increased.

In Lojom, through their hard work, women have been pushed to complement the loss of the men's production in the family. At the same time, the process of 'de-pastoralisation' has increased economic diversification and social differentiation, which has resulted in men from wealthier classes employing family and wage labour to take advantage of the opportunities provided by diversification, for their own individual gains. Within these types of families, male heads are the leaders and, through patriarchy and kinship, they command their free family labour, which is at their disposal. Once this is exhausted they hire cheap labour as well (see Chapter Six).<sup>332</sup>

Many male family heads belonging to mono-nuclear poor families, send their wives to work as *leja-leja* for a better off man living in Iriiri town. In these cases, patriarchy operates together with class and results in wives being part of what can be considered women labour classes. Mies (1999) has summarized the ways in which class and patriarchy intersect and reproduce inequality overtime as,

instead of using violent raids and slavery for acquiring more women as workers and producers than were born in a community, hypergamous marriage system were evolved, which made sure that the BIG MEN could have access not only to more women of their own community or class, but also to the women of the Small Men. Women became a commodity in an asymmetric or unequal marriage market, because control over more women meant accumulation of wealth (Meillassoux, 1974). The BIG MEN (the state) then became the *managers* of social reproduction as well as of production. In all patriarchal civilizations, the relationship between men and women maintained its character of being coercive and appropriative. (Mies, 1999: 67)

The social division of labour between wives and husbands is not identical across classes but rather changes along the different social classes. In Lojom, among the poorer classes, wives and husbands undertake more similar economic activities due to the necessity to secure their means of subsistence. As wealth grows, there is an

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<sup>332</sup> Interview with case study number #2 (see Appendix I).

increasing differentiation in the social division of labour between wives and husbands. While wives are fundamentally employed in the same activities, regardless of their social class – such as trading natural resources, doing *leja-leja* and public work activities –, what changes in the wealthier families are the activities undertaken by the men. Throughout this thesis I have illustrated several cases of wealthier men running shops in Iriiri, occupying public positions of power or working for NGOs – jobs and activities that are never or rarely carried out by women. This finding goes against what was found in Bangladesh by Kabeer (2015), whereby '[...] gender inequalities were not confined to the poor, they tended to be exacerbated by poverty' (Kabeer, 2015: 192).

In Mies' view there is no separation between 'capitalism' and 'patriarchy' as these two social structures 'transcended' in one intrinsically interwoven/interrelated system. Most women in Lojom are exploited both by men through patriarchy and by capital through social classes. In other words, there is both the dominance of one class over others, that intersects with men's dominance over women. The coexistence of patriarchal relations and class differentiation in Lojom explains the reasons why female-headed families from the middle class are 'free' from patriarchal relations at a family level, but still experience subordination within the society, in the social division of labour.

## 11. Conclusions

This thesis has helped to understand the consequences and impacts of the historical transformation of one group of the Karamojong, the Bokora, from a transhumant agro-pastoral system to a sedentarized and more diversified economic system. In particular it shows the ways in which families' production, accumulation and social reproduction have changed, thus transforming a society that traditionally presented low levels of social differentiation and high levels of 'vertical' social mobility, into a society that is economically more diversified, characterised by increasing levels of social differentiation and the formation of more crystallized social classes. The thesis also shows that this process of social differentiation is multi-layered, with multiple forms of differentiation that are cross-cutting, intersecting and reinforcing one another. The emergent class structures intersect with both kinship connections and patronage relations. Within families, classes are cross-cut by uneven gender relations between women and men. The interplay of these aspects results in a highly fragmented and differentiated society, with a local elite of male relatives ruling over the rest of the village.

The historical cause of the increasing social differentiation in Lojom is embedded in the process of 'de-pastoralisation', which consists in 'livestock dispossession', and results in the transformation of the modes of production from a transhumant agro-pastoral system to a sedentarized and more diversified economic system. The concept of 'de-pastoralisation' illustrates the process of historical loss of people and animal mobility, in tandem with large 'livestock dispossessions', and the replacement of livestock with 'marginal farming', off-farm production and wage income. Following the 'de-pastoralisation' process, the main ways for the residents of Lojom to earn a living are not only connected to farming. For poorer classes brewing and selling firewood and charcoal are key activities. For the Big Men, a connection to the 'salaried economy' of 'development' is critical.

The findings of this dissertation thus both run contrary to the narratives employed by most of the development agents the region – which mainly focus on

farming – and contend the expectation that livestock-keepers will turn into farmers as they sedentarise.

Historically, the ‘de-pastoralisation’ process experienced by the Bokora was strongly encouraged by aid agencies and different religious institutions following the great famine of 1980. Until state intervention in the region through the disarmament programme in the early 2000s, the Catholic Church and aid agencies acted as the state through the provision of services and the promotion of new social values and a different economic system. The process of ‘de-pastoralisation’ among the Bokora was further advanced through the state disarmament programmes, which fully incorporated the region within the political economy of the Ugandan state. For the inhabitants of Iriiri and Lojom, this has signified the end of their lives as independent producers. This thesis argues that Karamoja’s incorporation into the Ugandan state through its ‘de-pastoralisation’ has increased social differentiation resulting in inequality becoming more permanent, sharply reducing social mobility. In the village of Lojom, the formation of more crystallized social classes has enhanced non-egalitarian and exploitative relations of social production between few wealthier families over the majority of poorer families.

To understand the causes of social differentiation – and therefore the accumulation of wealth and the formation of social classes in Lojom – the thesis identifies two major historical pathways or means of accumulation: the possession of rifles and formal education. The first Bokora settlers in the area of Iriiri accessed vast quantities of free land and survived through a combination of farming and Christian missionary and humanitarian assistance until they armed themselves in the mid-1980s and rebuilt their herds, mainly through armed raiding. Successful raiders – such as Adupinkal – also called ‘the father of the warriors’ – invested the livestock surplus in the expansion of his families and social network, creating a cycle of cattle accumulation, whereby through the progressive accumulation of social dependants he was able to accumulate more cattle and eventually become one of the wealthiest families in Iriiri sub-county (including Lojom).

Being that the Bokora were the first Karamojong group to lose large quantities of animals – and with that their traditional modes of production – they accessed the opportunities provided by the national economy and they found jobs in the formal

power structure before any other Karamojong group, thus becoming part of a local elite both in Iriiri and in the rest of the region. The life history of Lokwaakou shows that by being one of the few of his generation to complete lower secondary school in Karamoja through the support of the Christian missionaries, he had a brilliant career as a civil servant with an international faith based organization.

Regardless of the different historical pathways of wealth accumulation that can be traced between Lokwaakou and Adupinkal, what is similar are the ways in which they conduct investments on social reproduction. The favourite investment is in livestock possession as a way to legitimate power and to further increase family and herd sizes. In spite of the process of 'de-pastoralisation', livestock possession still provides for male owners access to an extended family network that is exploited as free labour. It also grants power and respect both in the village and in the extended family; and finally, it gives material advantages in agricultural production, as capital and saving. While in the past the command over extended family labour was mainly geared towards grazing, raiding and protecting the herd, presently it is used for agricultural and off-farm activities.

Most of the families in Lojom, on the other hand, failed to exploit the opportunities provided by external actors and to find jobs in the formal power structure. Once dispossessed, after the great famine of 1980 they have been surviving through different activities, such as relief aid, provided by both the Catholic Church and aid agencies, 'marginal farming', and selling their labour power. These supports and opportunities have saved their lives but have also hindered them from accumulating any wealth, thus keeping them in the reproduction of their 'poverty trap'.

In order to understand the drivers of social differentiation – and therefore the crisis of social reproduction – the thesis shows different practices through which the wealthier classes (the 'rural capitalists') reproduce and accumulate new wealth. These 'practices of accumulation' are also conducted through exploitation of both poorer people and women ('rural peasants' and 'too poor to farm'), thus causing most families in Lojom to remain trapped in chronic poverty and food insecurity. This overall increasing inequality generates the dependency of members from the poorer classes on the salaries issued by those in the better off and middle classes. This condition of highly uneven power relations between classes – where poorer classes have to sell

their labour for 3,000 UGX a day otherwise they perish – is exploited by wealthier classes. These salaries are too low for the labourers to eventually invest in any productive activity, resulting in a ‘poverty trap’.

Further to the formation of social classes with high levels of inequality, there are other social structures, such as patriarchy, kinship and patronage relations that have justified and reproduced the current system over time.

Patriarchal relations allow men with a pre-existent livestock possession to invest through the payment of bridewealth in the marriage of several women. I show that the aim of most men in Lojom is to create a family that is as extended as possible, in order to both acquire social prestige and to have control over the greatest quantity of free labour power possible. The historical process of ‘de-pastoralisation’ and increasing economic diversification has resulted in wealthier husbands employing their extended family labour (and especially their wives) into different economic activities, such as farming, humanitarian and development activities, trading of natural resources and selling labour. These activities are tasks often assigned by husbands to their wives and female relatives, thus increasing wives and female relatives’ workloads and establishing a labour class comprised mainly of women. Within a polygynous family, for example, any economic surplus that is produced by each ‘sub family unit’ it is then controlled by the male head (or Big Man), who invest the surplus in different economic activities thus reproducing his social and material condition and accumulating new wealth for himself. These social relations are shaped and reproduced by ideologies which are part of the traditional culture and also promoted by the Catholic Church, which endorses patriarchal relations.

I also show as an additional characterizing feature of the wealthier classes of Lojom the fact that they are mainly composed of close relatives. This is because Big Men prefer to marry women from other rich families so as to increase their prestige and to access political favours and material assets. As a consequence, in Lojom poor and very poor classes are cut-off from patronage relations as these relations mainly work between families belonging to the same social classes. Through kinship relations there are exchanges of resources and favours across different classes, but mainly between better off and middle classes. In this way class relations intersect with kinship

relations, thus creating a local elite that reproduces itself over time leaving almost no opportunities to the poorer classes of 'vertical' social mobility.

While in the past property rights over assets and resources between peoples presented a higher degree of fluidity – because of the type assets owned, which were easily depleted by raids, droughts and diseases – presently, once wealth is assured to a certain group social differentiation tends to crystallize.

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## APPENDIX I: Summary of the Instruments and Number of Interviews

| #  | Name                | Position  | Organization                          | Date of Interviews | Methods of Interviews                         | Language |
|--|---------------------|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------|---|----------|
| <p><i>KNOWLEDGEABLE REGIONAL INFORMANTS LIVING IN KAMPALA, UK, US AND ITALY</i></p> <p><i>(Names are non-anonymised)</i></p> |                     |   |                                       |                    |   |          |
| 1.   | Michael Dwight Quam | Professor   | University                            | 19-12-13           | e-mail  | English  |
|  |                     |   |                                       | 10-01-14           | e-mail  |          |
| 2.   | John Welch          | Professor   | University                            | 19-06-13           | e-mail  | English  |
|  |                     |   |                                       | 08-07-13           | e-mail  |          |
| 3.   | Ben Knighton        | Professor   | Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, UK | 10-12-14           | Taped in Oxford                               | English  |
|  |                     |   |                                       | 02-03-15           | e-mail  |          |
|  |                     |   |                                       | 17-09-15           | Skype   |          |
| 4.   | Bernard Broughton   | Consultant and ex-OXFAM worker in the 1980s in Karamoja | None                                  | Several times      | Informal discussions in Kampala               | English  |
| 5.   | Claudio Chiappa     | NGO coordinator, lived in Iriiri since 1996             | SVI                                   | Several times      | Informal discussions in Kampala and in Iriiri | Italian  |
|  |                     |   |                                       | 09-07-15           | Skype   |          |

|     |                         |  |                      |               |                  |         |
|-----|-------------------------|--|----------------------|---------------|------------------|---------|
| 6.  | Peter Lokeris           | Minister of Energy and Minerals born in Karamoja       | Government of Uganda | 12-12-13      | Taped in Kampala | English |
| 7.  | Florian Baakle          | UNHCS Head of Security in Karamoja                     | WFP                  | 28-05-13      | Taped in Kampala | English |
| 8.  | David Pulkol            | Ex-Karamoja Member of Parliament born in the region    | None                 | 12-11-12      | Taped in Kampala | English |
| 9.  | Sergio Regi             | Agronomist who worked in Uganda and Karamoja           | WFP                  | Several Times | Kampala          | Italian |
|     |                         |  |                      | 20-03-16      | e-mail           |         |
| 10. | Jimi Richardson         | Ex-WFP Head of Food and Nutrition Security in Karamoja | WFP                  | Several Times | Kampala          | English |
|     |                         |  |                      | 26-05-14      | Skype            |         |
| 11. | Elfrida Cavalcossi      | Consultant   | None                 | 24-04-14      | e-mail           | English |
|     |                         |  |                      | 01-06-15      | e-mail           |         |
| 12. | Frank Emmanuel Muhereza | PhD Candidate  | MISR                 | 28-01-14      | e-mail           | English |
| 13. | James Bevan             | Executive Director                                     | CAR                  | 13-12-13      | Linkedin         | English |
| 14. | Ross Smith              | Head of Programme                                      | WFP                  | 03-11-15      | Skype            | English |

|  |                         |                                  |                        |               |  |         |
|--|-------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|---------------|--|---------|
| 15.  | Ian Robinson            | Consultant                       | FAO                    | 15-07-14      | e-mail                                       | English |
| <p align="center"><i>REGIONAL LEADERS LIVING IN KARAMOJA</i></p> <p align="center"><i>(Names are non-anonymised)</i></p> |                         |                                  |                        |               |  |         |
| 1  | Fr. Germano             | Comboni Missionary               | Catholic Church Moroto | 10-08-13      | e-mail                                       | English |
|  |                         |                                  |                        | 30-08-13      | Taped in Moroto                              |         |
|  |                         |                                  |                        | 28-10-13      | e-mail                                       |         |
|  |                         |                                  |                        | 10-11-13      | e-mail                                       |         |
|  |                         |                                  |                        | 11-06-15      | e-mail                                       |         |
|  |                         |                                  |                        | 20-09-15      | e-mail                                       |         |
| 2  | Giuliano Consoli        | Ex-SVI staff and Laic Missionary | None                   | 29-10-13      | Taped in Kampala                             | Italian |
|  |                         |                                  |                        | 04-07-15      | e-mail                                       |         |
|  |                         |                                  |                        | 06-05-16      | Skype  |         |
|  |                         |                                  |                        | 07-05-16      | WhatsApp                                     |         |
| 3  | Alessandro Bettoli      | NGO Officer                      | 'Insieme si può' (ISP) | Several times | Informal discussions in Karamoja and Kampala | Italian |
|  |                         |                                  |                        | 12-07-15      | e-mail                                       |         |
| 4  | Longoli Apalochub akori | Researcher                       | Master Student         | Several times | Informal discussions in Moroto               | English |
|  |                         |                                  |                        | 15-10-15      | Skype  |         |
|  |                         |                                  |                        | 14-01-16      | Skype  |         |
|  |                         |                                  |                        | 2015-2016     | Facebook messenger and comments of posts     |         |

|   |                     |  |                                 |               |   |         |
|---|---------------------|--|---------------------------------|---------------|---|---------|
| 5   | Fr. Marco           | Comboni Missionary                             | Catholic Church Mathany         | 12-08-13      | Taped in Mathany                          | Italian |
|   |                     |  |                                 | 18-09-13      | Taped in Mathany                          |         |
| 6   | Fr. Paul Ngole      | Priest   | Moroto Dioceses                 | 22-11-13      | Taped in Moroto                           | English |
| 7   | Elizabeth Nachan    | Field Monitor                                  | WFP                             | 16-10-13      | Taped in Iriiri                           | English |
| 8   | Esther Napeyok      | SAGE Officer                                   | District Local Council in Napak | Several times | Informal discussions in Moroto and Iriiri | English |
|   |                     |  |                                 | 13-08-12      | E-mail                                    |         |
| 9   | Loboro Guide Konyen | Owner of the Gas Station in Moroto             | None                            | 08-11-13      | Taped in Moroto                           | English |
| 10  | Peter Ken           | Wealthy Business man and ex-RDC born in Iriiri | None                            | 22-11-13      | Taped in Moroto                           | English |
| <p><i>LOCAL LEADERS LIVING IN THE AREA OF IRIIRI AND LOJOM</i></p> <p><i>(Names are non-anonymised)</i></p> |                     |  |                                 |               |   |         |
| 1   | Fr. Elia Ciapetti   | Ex-Comboni Missionary in Iriiri                | Catholic Church Iriiri          | 14-10-15      | Skype                                     | Italian |
| 2   | Fausto Conter       | NGO Officer in Iriiri                          | SVI                             | Several times | Informal discussions in Iriiri and Lojom  | Italian |
|   |                     |  |                                 | 07-05-15      | Skype                                     |         |
|   |                     |  |                                 | 03-12-15      | Skype                                     |         |

|   |                      |  |                        |               |                                |                           |
|---|----------------------|--|------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 3 | Emalimal             | Ex-LC3 of Iriiri   | District Local Council | 14-11-13      | Taped in Iriiri                | English/<br>Ngakaramojong |
| 4 | Aleper Moses Locheme | Land Officer in Napak District   | District Local Council | 10-10-13      | Informal discussion in Iriiri  | English/<br>Ngakaramojong |
| 5 | Guti                 | General deployed in Somalia born in Iriiri                                 | UPDF                   | 07-07-14      | Taped in Iriiri                | English                   |
| 6 | Matteo Lothiang      | Local Businessman among the first person (still alive) who moved to Iriiri | None                   | 09-09-13      | Taped in Iriiri                | Ngakaramojong             |
|   |                      |  |                        | 11-10-13      |                                |                           |
|   |                      |  |                        | 21-10-13      | Taped in Iriiri                |                           |
|   |                      |  |                        | Several times | Informal discussions in Iriiri |                           |

|    |              |  |                         |          |                            |                        |
|----|--------------|--|-------------------------|----------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 7  | Ismael Jaber | Mosque Leader in Iriiri                              | Muslim Mosque in Iriiri | 24-04-13 | Taped in Iriiri            | Ngakaramojong /Swhaili |
| 8  | Paul Lomuria | LC1 Kokipurat village                                | District Local Council  | 29-11-13 | Taped in Iriiri            | Ngakaramojong          |
| 9  | Paul Abul    | Head Master in Moroto School, born in Iriiri         | Public Education        | 16-11-13 | Taped in Moroto            | English                |
| 10 | Elia         | Local elder and leader of the resettlement programme | None                    | 12-11-13 | Taped in Alekilek (Iriiri) | Ngakaramojong          |

*FAMILY AND INDIVIDUAL CASE STUDY INTERVIEWS IN THE AREA OF IRIIRI AND LOJOM*

*(Names are anonymised)*

|    |           |   |                            |               |  |                        |
|----|-----------|---|----------------------------|---------------|--|------------------------|
| 1. | Adupinkal | Chairman Local Council 3 of Iriiri sub-county and head of Lojom village | District Local Council     | 11-11-13      | Taped in Lojom                           | Ngakaramojong /English |
|    |           |   |                            | 19-11-13      | Taped in Iriiri                          |                        |
|    |           |   |                            | 21-04-15      | Skype                                    |                        |
|    |           |   |                            | 12-01-16      | Skype                                    |                        |
|    |           |   |                            | Several times | Informal discussions in Iriiri and Lojom |                        |
| 2. | Lokwaaku  | Local businessman and ex-civil servant from Lojom                       | Head of the SACO in Iriiri | Several times | Informal discussions in Iriiri and Lojom | English                |
|    |           |   |                            | 21-04-15      | Taped in Lojom                           |                        |
|    |           |   |                            | 22-11-15      | Taped in Iriiri                          |                        |

|    |               |  |                     |               |  |               |
|----|---------------|--|---------------------|---------------|--|---------------|
| 3. | Bosco         | NGO Field Officer in charge of Lojom and nearby villages | SVI                 | Several times | Informal discussions in Iriiri           | English       |
|    |               |  |                     | 15-11-13      | Taped in Iriiri                          |               |
| 4. | Kyonga Luchia | Female Headed Household                                  | None                | 14-01-16      | Skype                                    | Ngakaramojong |
| 5. | Ekorimug      | Large cattle owner                                       | None                | 18-10-13      | Taped in Iriiri                          | Ngakaramojong |
| 6. | Keem          | Local Businessman and ex-raider                          | None                | Several times | Informal discussions in Iriiri           | Ngakaramojong |
| 7. | Lochubakale   | Initiated elder and large cattle owner from Napeilet     | None                | 11-09-13      | Taped in Iriiri                          | Ngakaramojong |
|    |               |  |                     | Several times | Informal discussions in Iriiri           |               |
| 8. | Lomerikalei   | Head of LDUs in Iriiri                                   | UPDF/<br>Government | 29-11-13      | Taped in Lojom                           | Ngakaramojong |
|    |               |  |                     | Several times | Informal discussions in Iriiri and Lojom |               |
| 9. | Ewapet        | Wealthy head of family from Lojom                        | None                | Several times | Informal discussions in Lojom            | Ngakaramojong |
|    |               |  |                     | 29-01-16      | Skype                                    |               |

|     |               |   |         |               |  |                           |
|-----|---------------|---|---------|---------------|--|---------------------------|
| 10. | Alice         | Cleaner in Iriiri                                 | SVI     | Several times | Informal discussions in Iriiri           | English/<br>Ngakaramojong |
| 11. | Nadim         | NUSAF2 beneficiary                                | None    | 12-12-12      | Taped in Iriiri                          | Ngakaramojong             |
| 12. | Otyang        | SAGE and free food aid beneficiary                | None    | 20-10-12      | Taped in Iriiri                          | Ngakaramojong             |
| 13. | Nate Madeilla | SAGE beneficiary and NUSAF2 worker                | None    | 21-10-12      | Taped in Iriiri                          | Ngakaramojong             |
| 14. | Philippe      | NUSAF2 and SAGE beneficiary                       | None    | 07-12-12      | Taped in Iriiri                          | Ngakaramojong             |
| 15. | Betty         | Cleaner in Iriiri                                 | SVI     | Several times | Informal discussions in Iriiri           | English/<br>Ngakaramojong |
| 16. | Korobè        | Kraal Leader in Iriiri                            | None    | 10-10-13      | Taped in Iriiri                          | Ngakaramojong             |
| 17. | Akol          | CBO   | Caritas | Several times | Skype                                    | English                   |
|     |               |   |         | 02-09-15      |  |                           |
| 18. | Lonyangaluk   | Initiated elder and large cattle owner from Lojom | None    | Several times | Informal discussions in Iriiri and Lojom | Ngakaramojong             |
| #   | Topic         | Social Category                                   | Date    |               | Name of Participant                      |                           |



*PARTICIPANTS IN GROUP DISCUSSIONS FROM IRIIRI AND LOJOM*

*(Names are anonymised)*

|    |   |   |          |             |
|----|---|---|----------|-------------|
| 1. | Raiding in Iriiri                                   | Karimojong Former Warriors                | 29-04-13 | Keem        |
|    |   |   |          | Korobe      |
|    |   |   |          | Agan        |
|    |   |   |          | Longok      |
|    |   |   |          | Alegna      |
|    |   |   |          | Daniel      |
| 2. | Kraal in Nakicumet                                  | Karimojong Shepherds and Livestock Owners | 25-04-13 | Moses       |
|    |   |   |          | Paul        |
|    |   |   |          | Moru        |
|    |   |   |          | Amei        |
|    |   |   |          | Philip      |
| 3. | Oral History (Migration) in Iriiri                  | Karimojong Educated Elders                | 23-10-13 | Gabriel     |
|    |   |   |          | Daniel      |
|    |   |   |          | Mathew      |
| 4. | Oral History (Social Changes) in Iriiri             | Karimojong Initiated Elders               | 16-10-13 | Lonyangaluk |
|    |   |   |          | Lochubakale |
|    |   |   |          | Arapt       |
|    |   |   |          | Akoro       |
|    |   |   |          | Tulilin     |
| 5. | Oral History (Humanitarian Interventions) in Iriiri | Karimojong Civil Servants                 | 16-10-13 | Keem        |
|    |   |   |          | Elizabeth   |
| 6. | Culture and   | Karimojong                                | 14-10-13 | Maria       |
|    |   |   |          | Akol        |

|     |   |  |          |           |
|-----|---|--|----------|-----------|
|     | Society in Iriiri                           | Educated Youth boys and girls  |          | Stella    |
|     |   |  |          | Lidya     |
|     |   |  |          | Lopuko    |
| 7.  | Power, Wealth Inheritance in Iriiri         | Karimojong Educated NGO Staff  | 14-10-13 | Moses     |
|     |   |  |          | Bosco     |
|     |   |  |          | Florence  |
|     |   |  |          | Philipe   |
|     |   |  |          | Ruth      |
|     |   |  |          | Paul      |
| 8.  | Humanitarian, Aid and Development in Iriiri | Beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of social protection programmes        | 10-12-12 | Susan     |
|     |   |  |          | Akoule    |
|     |   |  |          | Lotukei   |
|     |   |  |          | Lotee     |
| 9.  | Humanitarian, Aid and Development in Iriiri | Female beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of social protection programmes | 11-12-12 | Lorot     |
|     |   |  |          | Kodet     |
| 10. | Wealth Ranking in Lojom                     | Sampled of people from Lojom   | 20-06-14 | Lokwaakou |
|     |   |  |          | Aboko     |
|     |   |  | 25-06-14 | Moses     |
|     |   |  |          | Paul      |
|     |   |  | 01-07-14 | Akol      |
|     |   |  |          | Lomokol   |
|     |   |  | 11-07-14 | Francesca |
|     |   |  |          | Moses     |

|     |                                       |  |          |          |
|-----|---------------------------------------|--|----------|----------|
| 11. | Generatio<br>n set-Age<br>set         | Elders<br>from<br>Lojom  | 10-09-13 | Kodet    |
|     |                                       |  |          | Loichi   |
| 12. | Brewing<br>and<br>Gender<br>Relations | Wives of<br>better off<br>and<br>middle<br>class<br>husbands<br>in Lojom | 03-03-14 | Lokwii   |
|     |                                       |  |          | Nachugae |
|     |                                       |  |          | Lakawa   |
|     |                                       |  |          | Abura    |

## APPENDIX II: Food Basket

| Did you eat this food in the last 7 days? |     |    | How did you get this food? |           |          |                                |                  |       |
|---|-----|----|----------------------------|-----------|----------|--------------------------------|------------------|-------|
| Type of Food                              | YES | NO | Own Production             | Purchased | Food Aid | Gift (from Relative or Friend) | <i>Leja-Leja</i> | Other |
| Posho (maize)                             | 98  | 1  | 19                         | 43        | 5        | 6                              | 20               | 6     |
| Greens                                    | 94  | 5  | 90                         | 2         | 0        | 2                              | 0                | 1     |
| Boiled cassava/sweet potatoes             | 83  | 16 | 16                         | 18        | 0        | 20                             | 30               | 0     |
| Sunflower                                 | 82  | 17 | 28                         | 28        | 0        | 19                             | 3                | 5     |
| Fish (mukene or mad fish)                 | 78  | 21 | 1                          | 74        | 0        | 0                              | 0                | 4     |
| Fruit                                     | 60  | 39 | 28                         | 9         | 0        | 24                             | 0                | 0     |
| Meat                                      | 60  | 39 | 11                         | 49        | 0        | 1                              | 0                | 0     |
| Beans                                     | 44  | 55 | 6                          | 32        | 2        | 3                              | 1                | 0     |
| Chapati/samosa                            | 20  | 79 | 1                          | 20        | 0        | 0                              | 0                | 0     |
| Pumpkin                                   | 18  | 81 | 4                          | 0         | 0        | 13                             | 0                | 2     |
| Milk (ghee and butter)                    | 15  | 84 | 10                         | 1         | 0        | 4                              | 0                | 1     |
| Chicken/duck/turkey                       | 13  | 86 | 10                         | 4         | 0        | 0                              | 0                | 0     |
| Bread                                     | 9   | 90 | 9                          | 0         | 0        | 1                              | 0                | 0     |
| Eggs                                      | 8   | 91 | 8                          | 1         | 0        | 0                              | 0                | 0     |
| Matoke                                    | 6   | 93 | 1                          | 5         | 0        | 1                              | 0                | 0     |
| Rice                                      | 6   | 93 | 0                          | 7         | 0        | 0                              | 0                | 0     |
| Bananas                                   | 3   | 96 | 1                          | 2         | 0        | 1                              | 0                | 0     |
| Blood                                     | 1   | 98 | 0                          | 0         | 0        | 2                              | 0                | 0     |
| Cassava flour                             | 1   | 98 | 0                          | 1         | 0        | 0                              | 1                | 0     |

### APPENDIX III: Agricultural Calendar

| Month                             | General Agricultural Related Activities Around Iriiri   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| January<br>(Dry season)           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Men are hunting</li> <li>-Men are bush clearing the land mainly through the burning of grass which helps for hunting as well</li> <li>-Some families are harvesting cassava</li> <li>-Some families are preparing the granaries</li> <li>-Some families are harvesting the long term sorghum</li> <li>-Overall families are building new huts, fencing and renovating (<i>alaar</i>)</li> </ul> |
| February<br>(Dry season)          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Some people are preparing the granaries</li> <li>-Men are still hunting</li> <li>-Men are bush clearing the land mainly through the burning of grass which helps for hunting as well</li> </ul>   |
| March<br>(Dry season/First rains) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Men are ploughing to be ready for the first rains (often in the second half of March)</li> <li>-Before the beginning of the last week of March women are planting Maize, short term Sorghum, Beans and Cow Peas</li> <li>-Men and women are preparing the vegetable gardens</li> </ul>  |
| April<br>(Wet season)             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Women plant the vegetable garden: tomatoes, onions, sukumawiki, eggplants, spinach</li> <li>-Men are ploughing for the late cultivation like g-nuts and sim sim</li> </ul>  |
| May<br>(Wet season)               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Women are doing the first weeding</li> </ul>  |
| June<br>(Wet season)              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-First harvest for those who have prepared the fields in advance</li> <li>-After harvesting men are ploughing for the second cultivation like: beans, long term sorghum, sunflower and cassava</li> <li>-First weeding for the cultivation planted in April</li> </ul>   |
| July<br>(Second small rains)      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-First weeding for the cultivation planted in April</li> <li>-Harvest of maize, sorghum, beans and vegetable</li> <li>-After harvesting men are ploughing for the second cultivation like: beans, long term sorghum, sunflower and cassava</li> </ul>  |
| August<br>(Second small rains)    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Harvesting maize</li> <li>-Harvesting sorghum and other cultivation for who has been late in planting</li> <li>-Harvest of vegetables</li> <li>-Planting of cassava</li> <li>-Drying of the ready grains</li> <li>-Harvest of g-nuts</li> </ul>   |
| September<br>(Second small rains) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Drying and storing of the ready grains</li> <li>-Weeding and harvest of vegetable and crops still on the ground</li> </ul>  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | -Harvest of g nuts   |
| <b>October</b><br>(Second small rains) | -Drying and storing of the ready grains<br>-Weeding and harvest of vegetable and crops still on the ground<br>-Harvest of g-nuts   |
| <b>November</b><br>(Dry season)        | -Drying, storing and marketing the surplus of grains<br>-Following the cultivation still on the ground, like long term sorghum, tobacco and cassava<br>-Harvest of sunflower |
| <b>December</b><br>(Dry season)        | -Enjoying the harvest<br>-Following the cultivation still on the ground and in case of something ready, harvest of it  |

## APPENDIX IV: Economy of Beer

### Production costs for preparing *Kweete* (5-09-13)

Maize = 7 cans = 17,500 UGX (plus graining 300 UGX per can) = 2,100 UGX

Sorghum = 3 cans = 4,500 UGX (plus graining 300 UGX per can) = 900 UGX

Cassava = 4 cans = 8,000 UGX (plus graining 300 UGX per can) = 1,200 UGX

Water = 12 jerry cans = 200 UGX per jerry can

Firewood = 2 bundles = 4,000 UGX

1 Sauce pan (for water) = 1,000 UGX to borrow

2 Sauce pan (for cooking) = 1,000 UGX to borrow

Drum = 200 L = 1,000 UGX to borrow

Labour = 7 days

### Total costs:

41,200 UGX (without paying for jerry cans - most of the time)

43,600 UGX (paying someone to collect water - rarely)

### Total production:

*Kweete* = 5/6 jerry cans

### Trade (fix prices):

1 small cup = 0.5 L = 200 UGX

1 big cup = 2.5 L = 1,000 UGX

1 jerry can = 9,000 UGX

1 jerry can = around 23 L

## APPENDIX V: Recent History of Grazing Movements

|  | 2012   | 2013   | 2014  |
|--|--|--|---|
| UPDF<br>Protected<br>Kraal of Iriiri<br>from 2005 to<br>2011 | <i>March:</i><br>From the kraal of<br>Nabwal to<br>manyattas                                     | <i>March:</i><br>From the kraal of<br>Lomorunyangai to manyattas   | <i>March:</i><br>From the kraals<br>of Apeipuke and<br>Lomuriangalepan<br>to manyattas          |
|  | <i>June:</i><br>From manyattas<br>to the kraal of<br>Lokiteded                                   | <i>June:</i><br>From manyattas to the kraal<br>of Nakicumet  | <i>July:</i><br>From manyattas<br>moved to the<br>kraals of<br>Lomuriangalepan<br>and Nakicumet |
|  | <i>August:</i><br>From manyattas<br>to the kraal of<br>Lomuriangalepan                           | <i>September:</i><br>From the kraal of Nakicumet<br>to the kraal of Lokupooi   |   |
|  | <i>October:</i><br>From the kraals<br>of Lokiteded and<br>Lomuriangalepan<br>to<br>Lomorunyangai |  |   |
|  | <i>November 2011:</i><br>From the kraal of<br>Iriiri to the kraal<br>of Nabwal                   | <i>December:</i><br>From the kraal of Lokupooi,<br>animals were separated into<br>two: some went to the kraal<br>of Apeipuke and some went<br>to the kraal of<br>Lomuriangalepan. The kraal<br>of Lokupooi was divided into<br>two smaller kraals (at the end<br>of December or beginning of<br>January) because water and<br>pasture were inadequate. |   |
|  |  |  |   |



## APPENDIX VI: Census Survey Questionnaire

### INTRODUCTION

I am working on behalf of a research study and we are talking to people in this area to learn about their daily lives and their communities. The answers you give us will be kept confidential, and will be used to paint a general picture of life in your community. This survey **does not** involve the Government in Kampala or the Local Government in Napak or Iriiri. The survey is for research purposes only. We are students and are not linked with any development programmes or projects. This study has nothing to do with **food aid** programmes in your area, so you can be open with us.

Questionnaire number: .....

Enumerator's Name.....

Respondent's Name.....

DATE.....(dd/mm/yy)

TIME..... (hh/mm)

## A. FAMILY PROFILE

(1) Is this a polygamous family? (circle one) Yes: 1 No: 2  
*Erai ekal lo nolo ke ekile anolo eyakatar naberu nuna alalak a?*

(2) Is this a female-headed family? (circle one) Yes: 1 No: 2  
*Erai ekal lo nolo epolokinit aberu a?*

\*List of all family members starting with the head of family

| Id code | Names<br>(write name if less than 1 year write 00)<br>(3) | How related to head of family?<br>(write code)<br>(4) | Male [M] or Female [F]<br>(circle one)<br>(5) | Age<br>(If less than 1 year write 00 and age in complete years)<br>(6) | Years of school completed<br>(write code)<br>(7) | Where does she/he live?<br>(write code)<br>(8) | Where did she/he born?<br>(write code)<br>(9) |
|---------|---|---|---|--|--|--|---|
|         |   |   | M   | F  |  |  |   |
| 01      |   |   | 1   | 2  |  |  |   |
| 02      |   |   | 1   | 2  |  |  |   |
| 03      |   |   | 1   | 2  |  |  |   |
| 04      |   |   | 1   | 2  |  |  |   |
| 05      |   |   | 1   | 2  |  |  |   |
| 06      |   |   | 1   | 2  |  |  |   |
| 07      |   |   | 1   | 2  |  |  |   |
| 08      |   |   | 1   | 2  |  |  |   |
| 09      |   |   | 1   | 2  |  |  |   |
| 10      |   |   | 1   | 2  |  |  |   |

### Codes: How related to head of family?

01 = family head  
 02 = wife  
 03 = son / daughter of head or wife  
 04 = son-in-law / daughter-in-law  
 05 = grandson / granddaughter  
 06 = father / mother of head or wife  
 07 = brother / sister of head / wife  
 08 = other relative of head/ wife  
 09 = adopted  
 10 = non-relative / servant

### Codes: Years of school completed

1= None  
 2= Some primary  
 3= Completed primary  
 4= Some secondary  
 5= Completed secondary  
 6= Vocational  
 7= University  
 8= Other (write in.....)

### Codes: Where did she/he born?

1 = in Lojom  
 2 = in Iriiri town council  
 3 = in Mathany  
 4 = in Kangole  
 5 = in Lotome  
 6 = in Lokopo  
 7 = in Moroto  
 8 = in Soroti  
 09 = in Kampala  
 10 = Other (write in.....)

### Codes: Where does she/he live?

1 = in Lojom same ekal  
 2 = in Lojom different ekal  
 3 = in Iriiri town  
 4 = in Mathany  
 5 = in Kangole  
 6 = in Lotome  
 7 = in Lokopo  
 8 = in Moroto  
 9 = in Soroti  
 10 = in Mbale  
 11 = in Kampala  
 12 = Other (write in.....)

## B. Demographics and Culture

(10) How long have your family lived in this village? (circle one)

*Nikaru njiae eboyotor iyonj alore alo?*

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Less than 1 year      | 1 |
| 1-5 years             | 2 |
| More than 5 years     | 3 |
| Other (write in.....) | 4 |

(11) If less than 5 years, why did your family move here? (Please explain)

*Ani pa kedolit ekaru, kotere nyo irotokinio iyonj ane?*

---

(12) How long do your family plan to stay in this village? (circle one)

*Paka ori icamitor iyonj akiboi alore alo?*

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Less than 1 year      | 1 |
| 1-5 years             | 2 |
| More than 5 years     | 3 |
| Other (write in.....) | 4 |

(13) If plan to move in less than 1 year, why? (Please explain)

*Ani kicamito iyes arotokin erinja nyedolo ekaru, kotere nyo?*

---

(14) What is the main religion practiced in your family? (circle one)

*Ali din ilipi iyonj?*

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Catholic              | 1 |
| Muslim                | 2 |
| Traditional           | 3 |
| Pentecostal           | 4 |
| Anglican              | 5 |
| None                  | 6 |
| Other (write in.....) | 7 |

(15) Have you been initiated? (circle one) Yes: 1 No: 2 *Isapanit iyonj a?*

(16) Has your father been initiated? (circle one) Yes: 1 No: 2 *Esapanit apakon a?*

(17) What generation set is your father? (circle one) Ngimoru: 1 Ngigetei: 2

*Ani nyamet idokintoi apakon?*

### C. ASSETS

(18) Which of the following productive assets does your family own?

| Assets                          | Number owned<br>(write number and acres for land)<br>(19) | Number owned before disarmament (2001)<br>(Akinyak ngatomian)<br>(write number)<br>(20) | If number has reduced, reason for loss<br>(circle one only)<br>(21) | If number has increased, method of acquisition<br>(circle one only)<br>(22) |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Land                            |   |   | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  | 1 2 3 4 5 6   |
| Cattle (Bull-Heifer-Calves)     |   |   | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  | 1 2 3 4 5 6   |
| Small stock (Goat and Sheep)    |   |   | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  | 1 2 3 4 5 6   |
| Pigs                            |   |   | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  | 1 2 3 4 5 6   |
| Poultry (Turkeys-Chicken-Ducks) |   |   | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  | 1 2 3 4 5 6   |
| Donkeys                         |   |   | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  | 1 2 3 4 5 6   |
| Camels                          |   |   | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  | 1 2 3 4 5 6   |
| Ox-Plough                       |   |   | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  | 1 2 3 4 5 6   |
| Jerry can                       |   |   | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  | 1 2 3 4 5 6   |
| Panga/Axe/Hoe                   |   |   | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  | 1 2 3 4 5 6   |
| Engine-grinding mill            |   |   | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  | 1 2 3 4 5 6   |
| Hand-grinding mill              |   |   | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  | 1 2 3 4 5 6   |
| Cart                            |   |   | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  | 1 2 3 4 5 6   |
| Hand tractor                    |   |   | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  | 1 2 3 4 5 6   |
| Motorbike                       |   |   | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  | 1 2 3 4 5 6   |
| Car                             |   |   | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  | 1 2 3 4 5 6   |
| Bicycle                         |   |   | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  | 1 2 3 4 5 6   |

Codes: Reason for reduction in number

- 1 = stolen/raid
- 2 = diseases (livestock only)
- 3 = bride price/ekicul (livestock only)
- 4 = eaten/consumed (livestock only)
- 5 = sold for food
- 6 = sold (not for food)
- 7 = died in drought (livestock only)
- 8 = fine or compensation payment
- 9 = confiscated by the UPDF
- 10 = other (.....)

Codes: Reason for increase in number

- 1 = purchased
- 2 = received as donation/gift
- 3 = bride price/ekicul (livestock only)
- 4 = born (livestock only)
- 5 = stolen
- 6 = other (.....)

(23) Which of the following assets does your family own?  
*Aluboro ŋulu erai ŋulu ke ekal alo?*

| Asset                          | Yes | No | Number | Where is/are located?<br>(only for houses write the name of the location and number) |
|--------------------------------|-----|----|--------|--|
| Permanent house (bricks house) | 1   | 2  |        |  |
| Semi-permanent house (mud hut) | 1   | 2  |        |  |
| Stove                          | 1   | 2  |        |  |
| Cooking utensils               | 1   | 2  |        |  |
| Table                          | 1   | 2  |        |  |
| Mobile Phone                   | 1   | 2  |        |  |
| Book                           | 1   | 2  |        |  |
| Generator/Solar system         | 1   | 2  |        |  |
| Radio                          | 1   | 2  |        |  |
| Mattress                       | 1   | 2  |        |  |
| Mosquito Net                   | 1   | 2  |        |  |
| Laptop                         | 1   | 2  |        |  |
| Television                     | 1   | 2  |        |  |

(24) If you **own land**, how did you acquire this land? (circle one)

*Kerai ee, ekokinio iyes erylunio ai?*

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Purchased                     | 1 |
| Inherited or received as gift | 2 |
| Leased-in                     | 3 |
| Just walked in (cleared)      | 4 |
| Do not know                   | 5 |
| Other (write in.....)         | 6 |

(25) If you **own land**, what is your tenure system? (circle one)

*Ani kiyakar iyon ŋalup ŋuna erai ŋuna kon, nyo erae ekonipite?*

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Freehold              | 1 |
| Leasehold             | 2 |
| Communal              | 3 |
| Customary             | 4 |
| Other (write in.....) | 5 |

### D. Food Security

(26) During the last dry season, did your family suffer any shortage of food to eat?

(circle one) Yes: 1 No: 2

*Alorwa anulu ka akamu aponi iyes toryamunae njican njulu ka akimuj a?*

(27) During the worst month this year, how many times a day did the adults and children in your family eat?

#### Number of meals per day

(circle one for each row)

Adults

0 1 2 3 4

Children (= school-age / working,  
not infants)

0 1 2 3 4

**Code:** 0 = sometimes passed a whole day without eating anything

## E. Food Consumption

(28) Have you or any member of your family eaten these foods at home in the last 7 days?

| Food                          | Yes<br>(for each line<br>circle either 1<br>or 2) | No | (29) If "YES", where did you get this food? (Circle all that apply) |           |          |                              |           |
|-------------------------------|---|----|---|-----------|----------|------------------------------|-----------|
|                               |   |    | Own Production  | Purchased | Food Aid | Gift from Relative or Friend | Leja-Leja |
| Posho                         | 1   | 2  | 3   | 4         | 5        | 6                            | 7         |
| Rice                          | 1   | 2  | 3   | 4         | 5        | 6                            | 7         |
| Greens                        | 1   | 2  | 3   | 4         | 5        | 6                            | 7         |
| Boiled cassava/sweet potatoes | 1   | 2  | 3   | 4         | 5        | 6                            | 7         |
| Sunflower                     | 1   | 2  | 3   | 4         | 5        | 6                            | 7         |
| Fruit                         | 1   | 2  | 3   | 4         | 5        | 6                            | 7         |
| Beans                         | 1   | 2  | 3   | 4         | 5        | 6                            | 7         |
| Meat                          | 1   | 2  | 3   | 4         | 5        | 6                            | 7         |
| Milk (ghee and butter)        | 1   | 2  | 3   | 4         | 5        | 6                            | 7         |
| Blood                         | 1   | 2  | 3   | 4         | 5        | 6                            | 7         |
| Eggs                          | 1   | 2  | 3   | 4         | 5        | 6                            | 7         |
| Chicken/duck/turkey           | 1   | 2  | 3   | 4         | 5        | 6                            | 7         |
| Fish (mukene or mad fish)     | 1   | 2  | 3   | 4         | 5        | 6                            | 7         |
| Bread                         | 1   | 2  | 3   | 4         | 5        | 6                            | 7         |
| Chapati/samosa                | 1   | 2  | 3   | 4         | 5        | 6                            | 7         |
| Other...                      | 1   | 2  | 3   | 4         | 5        | 6                            | 7         |

## F. FAMILY LIVELIHOOD ACTIVITIES

Next, I'd like to ask you how your family makes its living. In the last 12 months (between now and the same month last year), which types of work or activity did the members of your family do, in order to earn food and income? Who worked at each activity?

| Livelihood Activity   | Did anyone in your family do this activity in the last year?<br>(Circle one only)<br>(30) | Which member of family does it?<br>(Circle all that apply)<br>(31) | Average income earned per week in UGX<br>(32) |
|---|---|--|---|
| <b>LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION</b>                                     |   |  |   |
| Rearing & selling animals (donkey, cattle, sheep, goats)        | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Selling dairy products (milk, butter, ghee, cheese)             | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Selling meat (from own livestock)                               | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Selling hides and skins (from goats, sheep, cattle)             | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Piggery   | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Rearing chickens  | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Selling eggs (from own chickens)                                | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Beekeeping (selling honey, bees-wax, or bee-hives)              | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| <b>CROP FARMING</b>   |   |  |   |
| Sale of cereal food crops (sorghum, maize, etc.)                | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Sale of root crops (Irish potato, sweet potato, cassava, gnuts) | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Sale of pulses (beans, cow-pea, chick-pea)                      | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Sale of oil crops (simsim, sunflower)                           | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Sale of fruits (mango, powpow, banana, orange, lemon, etc.)     | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Sale of vegetables (onion, tomato, cabbage, pumpkin, etc.)      | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Sale of <i>Miraa</i>  | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| <b>SALE OF NATURAL PRODUCTS</b>                                 |   |  |   |
| Charcoal  | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Firewood  | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Water   | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Precious stones (gold, minerals)                                | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Wild animals  | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Wild fruits (ekimuree, ebolia, etc.)                            | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Animal feed (grass, fodder, forage, salty sand, etc.)           | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Construction materials (sand, grass, wooden poles, stones)      | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| <b>EMPLOYMENT / LABOUR</b>                                      |   |  |   |
| Salaried _____ job<br>(specify: _____)                          | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Construction worker (leja leja)                                 | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Farm worker (leja leja)   | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Animal herder (including shepherd)                              | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| House-maid (domestic servant)                                   | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Restaurant/hotel worker/bar                                     | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Local council   | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| UPDF/ASTU/LDU/Police service                                    | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Construction worker (masonry)                                   | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Carpenter, Furniture-maker, or Metal-worker                     | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| <b>TRADING (buying and selling)</b>                             |   |  |   |
| Livestock (cattle, sheep, goats, donkey)                        | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Livestock products (hides, butter, etc.)                        | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Food crops (grains, pulses, vegetables)                         | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |
| Other foods (sugar, flour, coffee, etc.)                        | Yes No  | 1 2 3 4  |   |



|   |        |         |
|---|--------|---------|
| Natural resources (charcoal, firewood and stones) | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Clothes and shoes                                 | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Building materials and hardware                   | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Contraband  | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| <i>Miraa</i>                                      | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Other commodities<br>(specify:_____)              | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |

#### **CRAFTS / SMALL INDUSTRY**

|   |        |         |
|---|--------|---------|
| Bricks making                             | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Basket-making, Mat-making                 | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Weaving, Knitting, Embroidery, Tailoring  | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Cobbling                                  | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Making traditional utensils or farm tools | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Decoration/tattoo                         | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Pottery                                   | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Making jewellery                          | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |

#### **SERVICES**

|  |        |         |
|--|--------|---------|
| Herbalist                              | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Water-carrier, Porter                  | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Counsellor (disputes, marriage)        | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Barber or Hairdresser                  | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Musician (drum-beater, singer, dancer) | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Catechist                              | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Community animal health worker (CAHW)  | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Traditional healer (Emuron-Amuron)     | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Traditional birth attendant (TBA)      | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |

#### **RENTS**

|   |        |         |
|---|--------|---------|
| Rent out house                              | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Rent out land                               | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Rent out animals (for transport or farming) | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Rent out wheelbarrow                        | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Rent out ox-cart                            | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Rent out ox-plough                          | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |

#### **FOOD & DRINK PROCESSING**

|  |        |         |
|--|--------|---------|
| Preparing and selling local brew                             | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Preparing and selling tobacco snuff                          | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Selling fruit juice (orange, etc) or soft drink (Fanta, etc) | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Selling cooked food  | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |

#### **OTHER (write name of activity)**

|                          |        |         |
|--------------------------|--------|---------|
| Begging                  | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |
| Other<br>(specify:_____) | Yes No | 1 2 3 4 |

#### **Codes: Which member of family does it?**

1= adult men

2= adult women

3= boy children

4= girl children

## G. CROP FARMING

(33) Did you (or any member of your family) farm during the last farming season?

(circle one) Yes: 1 No: 2

*Ibu iyon kori idyotunanan alokal kus kitaa ekaru ηolo bien akitare a?*

(34) If “YES”, please tell us about the land you used for farming and land you rented out or in  
*erai ee, tolimokinae iyes ηuna etapito ηalup, ηuna ibu iyon kitaa kori elipunito iyes aneni a icetunanan a?*

| (35) Access to Land | Yes | No | (36) If “YES”, how many acres did you farm? [or other unit] <small>(count land for all family members)</small> | (37) How much did you pay to rent in? | (38) How much did you get to rent out? |
|---------------------|-----|----|--|---------------------------------------|--|
|---------------------|-----|----|--|---------------------------------------|--|

Farmed own land

Rented in land

Rented out land

Free access to  
 someone's land

Gave land to someone  
 for free

(39) Is your farm situated in a good site? (circle one) Yes: 1 No: 2

*Eyai ekonimanikor neni ajokan a?*

(40) Do you have permanent water for farming purposes in the vicinity? (circle one)

Yes: 1 No: 2

*Iyakatar iyon ηakipi ηuna itemokino kotere akita alodiye kon a?*

(41) Do you use any water works or wells to irrigate your crops? (circle one) Yes: 1 No: 2

*Nyo isitiyae iyon anuna ηakipi kotere akicocwa ηikonikinyom a?*

(42) Do you use fertiliser on your crops to improve your farm's productivity? (circle one)

Yes: 1 No: 2

*Ibu iyon kisityae idyobore ηini nyera ηasike anuna akiyatakin ηaraito ηuna itemokino a?*

(43) Do you use animal manure on your crops to improve your farm's productivity?

(circle one) Yes: 1 No: 2

*Ibu iyon kisityae ηasike anuna aryamun akimuj ηina alalan a?*

(44) What are your major problems as a farmer?

*(Rank the top three, however if there are less than three constraints, only list what they want listed)*

*Aluchan iriamunit*

1 = Absence of land titles

2 = Scarce labour force

3 = Scarce agriculture inputs

4 = No oxen

5 = Crop diseases

6 = Government land confiscation

Main

[\_\_\_\_\_]

Secondary

*iyong*      *ikwa*    7 = Drought      [                      ]  
*eketan?*           8 = Floods  
                       9 = I don't own land  
                       10= I don't have enough  
                       land  
                       11= Other (write      Third  
                       in.....)      [                      ]

(45) For each crop grown, write the amount harvested in the most recent season, and what they did with the harvest

| Crop      | Number of<br>tins/cans/bags<br>harvested | Total<br>Kilograms | How many kilograms were: |                     |      | Total price sold in<br>UGX |
|-----------|--|--------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|------|----------------------------|
|           |  |                    | Eaten at home            | Given away for free | Sold |                            |
| Sorghum   |  |                    |                          |                     |      |                            |
| Maize     |  |                    |                          |                     |      |                            |
| Tomatoes  |  |                    |                          |                     |      |                            |
| Cassava   |  |                    |                          |                     |      |                            |
| Sunflower |  |                    |                          |                     |      |                            |
| Beans     |  |                    |                          |                     |      |                            |
| Onions    |  |                    |                          |                     |      |                            |
| Cow peas  |  |                    |                          |                     |      |                            |
| Gnuts     |  |                    |                          |                     |      |                            |
| Sweet     |  |                    |                          |                     |      |                            |
| Potatoes  |  |                    |                          |                     |      |                            |

## H. LIVESTOCK

I want to ask you about the conditions of pasture and water for your animals, also access to livestock markets and veterinary services. For each issue, state whether the situation during the past year has been “excellent”, “good”, “adequate”, “poor” or “very poor”. If you have no opinion or no information about this issue, say “don’t know”.

*[Try to get the respondent to give a short answer. If he or she gives a long explanation, listen carefully, and then summarise their explanation in one of the answers in the table below. Ask the respondent if this is the correct summary of their explanation, then circle the appropriate number. Then ask them to compare the situation now with the situation at the same time last year.]*

| Livestock Issues                              | What is the situation like right now?<br>(circle one only)<br>(46) | How is the situation now compared to the same time last year?<br>(circle one only)<br>(47) |
|---|--|--|
| How is the access to pasture for animals?     | 1 2 3 4 5 6  | 1 2 3 4  |
| How is the quality of pasture for animals?    | 1 2 3 4 5 6  | 1 2 3 4  |
| How is the availability of water for animals? | 1 2 3 4 5 6  | 1 2 3 4  |
| How is the access to veterinary services?     | 1 2 3 4 5 6  | 1 2 3 4  |
| How is the access to drugs for livestock?     | 1 2 3 4 5 6  | 1 2 3 4  |

Codes: What is the situation like right now?

- 1= Excellent
- 2= Good
- 3= Adequate
- 4= Poor
- 5= Very poor
- 6= Don’t know

Codes: How is the situation now compared to the same time last year?

- 1= Getting better
- 2= Getting worse
- 3= No change
- 4= Don’t know

(48) By whom your animals have been raided?

*(Rank the top two, ethnic raiders in your community, however if there are less than two, only list what they want listed)*

- 1= Matheniko
- 2= Bokora
- 3= Jie
- 4= Pian
- 5= Dodoth
- 6= Pokot/Upe
- 7= Tepeth
- 8= Turkana
- 9= Other (write in.....)

Main

[\_\_\_\_\_]

Secondary

[\_\_\_\_\_]

(49) If you never owned livestock did your parents/gran parents own any? (circle one) Yes: 1 No: 2  
*Ani kimamukatar iyon njidibaren, ayakatar papa kon kori paapa kon njidi a?*

(50) If you still own livestock, what are your major problems as a cattle keeper?

*(Rank the top three, however if there are less than three constraints, only list what they want listed)*

*Ani keriŋa iyon iyakatar ŋatuk, nyo nai erae ŋakonityokisyo ŋuna kiyokiet ikes a?*

- 1= Lack of pasture
- 2= Lack of water
- 3= Animal diseases
- 4= Insecurity and raids
- 5= UPDF
- 6= LDU
- 7= Small size for herd reproduction
- 8= Kraal system
- 9= Few shepherds
- 10= Other (write in.....)

Main

[\_\_\_\_\_]

Secondary

[\_\_\_\_\_]

Third

[\_\_\_\_\_]

(51) When you lost your livestock, why didn't you restock?

*(Rank the top two, however if there are less than two, only list what they want listed)*

*Ani kedaunito iyes acakar ŋikusibaren, nyo nai nyigeuneta iyes akigel ŋace a?*

- 1= I was not interested
- 2= I had no money
- 3= Animals were too expensive
- 4= Infringements with agriculture activities
- 5= Insecurity/raids
- 6= I didn't have shepherds all my sons go to school
- 7= Other (write in.....)

Main

[\_\_\_\_\_]

Secondary

[\_\_\_\_\_]

## I. INFORMAL TRANSFERS

In the last 12 months (between now and the same month last year), has your family **received** any of the following types of assistance **from anyone outside the family?**

If **YES**, who gave you this help – a relative, friend or neighbour, or someone else?  
Where does the person live – in your community, or somewhere else?

| Type of Transfer  | Yes No<br>(52) | From whom?<br>(53) | Where do they live?<br>(54) |
|---|----------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| Remittances   | 1 2            | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7      | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9           |
| Other cash gift   | 1 2            | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7      | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9           |
| Cash loan   | 1 2            | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7      | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9           |
| Grain loan  | 1 2            | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7      | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9           |
| Seed gift   | 1 2            | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7      | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9           |
| Seed loan   | 1 2            | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7      | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9           |
| Free labour   | 1 2            | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7      | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9           |
| Free use of oxen or plough  | 1 2            | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7      | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9           |
| Free use of land  | 1 2            | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7      | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9           |
| Distribution of meat to neighbours after a slaughter takes place (ceremony) | 1 2            | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7      | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9           |
| Dowry given to bride's parents  | 1 2            | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7      | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9           |
| <i>Ekicul</i>   | 1 2            | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7      | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9           |
| Other<br>(write in.....)  | 1 2            | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7      | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9           |

Codes: from whom?

1 = relative

2 = friend

3 = neighbour

4 = trader

5 = money lender

6 = parents

7 = other (write in.....)

Codes: where do they live?

1 = in the same village

2 = Iriiri town

3 = Kangole town

4 = Moroto town

5 = Soroti town

6 = Kampala town

7 = elsewhere in rural Uganda

8 = the West (e.g. UK or US)

9 = other (write in.....)

(55) Did you pay for dowry? (circle one) Yes: 1 No: 2

(56) If "YES", up to now, how much did you pay for dowry? *Nyatuk njai ibu iyon totac kotere ekiitanu a?*

| Wives  | Year or Period | Number of Cattle | Number of small stock (sheep & goats) | Cash in UGX | Debts? |
|--------|----------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|--------|
| Wife 1 |                |                  |                                       |             |        |
| Wife 2 |                |                  |                                       |             |        |
| Wife 3 |                |                  |                                       |             |        |
| Wife 4 |                |                  |                                       |             |        |
| Wife 5 |                |                  |                                       |             |        |
| Wife 6 |                |                  |                                       |             |        |
| Wife 7 |                |                  |                                       |             |        |
| Wife 8 |                |                  |                                       |             |        |
| Wife 9 |                |                  |                                       |             |        |

(57) Did you pay for ekicul? *(circle one)* Yes: 1 No: 2

(58) If “YES”, how much did you pay for ekicul?

| Children | Year or<br>Period | Number of<br>Cattle | Number of small stock<br>(sheep & goats) | Cash in<br>UGX | Debts? |
|----------|-------------------|---------------------|--|----------------|--------|
| Child 1  |                   |                     |  |                |        |
| Child 2  |                   |                     |  |                |        |
| Child 3  |                   |                     |  |                |        |
| Child 4  |                   |                     |  |                |        |
| Child 5  |                   |                     |  |                |        |
| Child 6  |                   |                     |  |                |        |
| Child 7  |                   |                     |  |                |        |
| Child 8  |                   |                     |  |                |        |
| Child 9  |                   |                     |  |                |        |

## L. FORMAL TRANSFERS

(59) In the past 12 months, which types of assistance did your family receive from Government or aid agencies?

*Alotooma ekaru nolo alunyar ani kinarakinet abu ekonikaal toryamu alotooma apukan a?*

| Food aid<br>(60) | Food-for-<br>Work<br>(61) | Cash-for-<br>Work<br>(62) | Free<br>cash<br>(63) | Seeds &<br>Tools<br>(64) | Trees & Stoves<br>(65) | Health care<br>assistance<br>(66) | Livestock<br>(67) | Animal<br>drugs<br>(68) |
|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Yes No<br>1 2    | Yes No<br>1 2             | Yes No<br>1 2             | Yes No<br>1 2        | Yes No<br>1 2            | Yes No<br>1 2          | Yes No<br>1 2                     | Yes No<br>1 2     | Yes No<br>1 2           |

(69) What have been the most important types of support/aid that you received over the past few years?

*(Rank the top three, however if there are less than three, only list what they want listed)*

*Nyo erai nakinarakineta nuna apolok nooi, nuna ipotu iyes toraymutu alotooma nidikaru nulu alunyarosi lu a?*

1= Seeds & Tools

2= Health care

assistance

3= Trees and stoves

4= Free cash

5= Livestock

6= Animal drugs

7= Food aid

8= Cash for work

9= Food for work

10= Other (write

in.....)

Main [\_\_\_\_\_]

Secondary [\_\_\_\_\_]

Third [\_\_\_\_\_]

## M. COPING STRATEGIES

(70) During the last emergency (e.g. drought, crop failure and other livelihood shocks), what did you do to survive? *(circle all that apply)*

*Alotooma nikaru nulu ka akoro ka njidekesyo, nyo nait aponi iyes kitiyae anuna ka ayarya a?*

| Coping strategy   | Yes | No | Coping strategy                    | Yes | No |
|---|-----|----|------------------------------------|-----|----|
| Eat less food (smaller portions)                              | 1   | 2  | Reduce the number of meals per day | 1   | 2  |
| Collect bush products to sell to buy food                     | 1   | 2  | Rent out animals (donkey, cattle)  | 1   | 2  |
| Collect wild fruits for food hunting (gazelle, dik-dik, etc.) | 1   | 2  | Reduce spending on non-food items  | 1   | 2  |
| Migrate to urban areas to find work                           | 1   | 2  | Rent out land                      | 1   | 2  |
| Borrow food or cash to purchase food                          | 1   | 2  | Sell land                          | 1   | 2  |
| Get help from relatives, friends and neighbours               | 1   | 2  | Sell animals                       | 1   | 2  |
| Skip meals for entire days                                    | 1   | 2  | Sell other assets to buy food      | 1   | 2  |
| Send children to work   | 1   | 2  | Harvest immature crops             | 1   | 2  |
| Begging   | 1   | 2  | Smuggling/contraband               | 1   | 2  |
| Other (specify): _____  | 1   | 2  | Consume seed stocks                | 1   | 2  |

(71) In the case of an emergency (e.g. drought, crop failure

1 = Close family  
2 = Extended family (local)  
3 = Extended family (city)

Main [\_\_\_\_\_]



- and other livelihood shocks), who does your family turn to for help?
- (Rank the top three, however if there are less than three sources, only list what they want listed)*
- |                             |           |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| 4 = Neighbours              |           |
| 5 = Friends                 | Secondary |
| 6 = Local Moneylender       | [_____]   |
| 7 = Informal credit groups  |           |
| 8 = Formal credit groups    | Third     |
| 9 = Church, religious group | [_____]   |
| 10 = Local NGOs             |           |
| 11= Western NGOs            |           |
| 12= Formal bank             |           |
| 13= Government              |           |
| 14= No-one                  |           |

(72) Did you or any member of your family out-migrate from Karamoja since the beginning of the disarmament? *(circle one)* Yes: 1 No: 2

(73) If "YES", why did you (or any member of your family) migrate from Karamoja?  
*(circle only one)*

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| To work as a casual labour | 1 |
| To graze animals           | 2 |
| To study                   | 3 |
| Because of insecurity      | 4 |
| Lost of animals            | 6 |
| Other (write in.....)      | 7 |

- (74) If "NO", why didn't you (or any member of your family) out-migrate from Karamoja?
- (Rank the top three, however if there are less than three, only list what they want listed)*
- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| 1= I am fine here                           |           |
| 2= There is free food aid                   | Main      |
| 3= I am not welcome outside Karamoja        | [_____]   |
| 4= The government doesn't allow me to leave | Secondary |
| 5= I can't afford to leave the region       | [_____]   |
| 6= Other (write in.....)                    |           |
- Kotere nyo

nyirokinio  
 iyon  
 aloKarimojon  
 a?

## N. CONFLICT AND DISPUTES

(75) Has any member of your family been injured, or lost their life, due to conflict (raiding and disarmament)?

(circle all that apply)

*Eyai idyotunanan nini abu totwan alokal kon, anuna ke ejie, apak njina ka arem kori natomian alokaracuna a?*

- |                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Someone was injured slightly  | 1 |
| Someone was seriously injured | 2 |
| Someone lost their life       | 3 |
| No injury or loss of life     | 4 |

(76) Has any member of your family been arrested/injured/killed since the disarmament started by the UPDF/ASTU/LDU? (circle one) Yes: 1 No: 2

*Abu idyotunanan njini alokal kus aponi kikamarae kori tarae alotooma njilapyo njulu tomon ka njarei anuna ka aryan / UPDF a?*

(77) Have you **lost** or **recovered** any livestock, granary stocks or property to raids or disarmament? (circle all that apply)

*Ibu iyon tocaka kori toryamu idyobore, kerai natuk, njimomwa, njiboro njice apak njina ka arem kori alemarere natomian a?*

|                      | Lost | Recovered |
|----------------------|------|-----------|
| 1-10 animals         | 1    | 1         |
| 11-50 animals        | 2    | 2         |
| More than 50 animals | 3    | 3         |
| Granary stocks       | 4    | 4         |
| Movable property     | 5    | 5         |
| Other                | 6    | 6         |
| (.....)              |      |           |

(78) In the past 12 months did you talk with any LC, police and UPDF officers? (circle one)  
 Yes: 1 No: 2

*Alolapyo njulu tomon ka njarei njulu alunyarosi ibu iyon toanyun kori kirworo ka njulu ka aryan kerai njipolicio kori njisigarya a?*

(

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <p>79) In case of any dispute with another person for matters such as: stealing, raping and domestic violence, what would you do?<br/> <i>(Rank the top three however if there are less than three, only list what they want listed)</i><br/> <b>Ani keya<br/>         ηadikiro ηuna<br/>         etapito akoko,<br/>         akikam ηapesur<br/>         alorot ka ηulu<br/>         eryamunito<br/>         aryenyeyo, nyo<br/>         itiyakin iyonη?</b></p> | <p>1= Take matters to the elders<br/>         2= Involve the police<br/>         3= Report to UPDF<br/>         4= Discuss with community prior acting<br/>         5= Beat the person<br/>         6= Kill the person<br/>         7= Report to a government official/LC1<br/>         8= Report to witch doctor<br/>         9= Report to LDU<br/>         10=Nothing</p>  | <p>Main<br/>         [_____]         <br/><br/>         Secondary<br/>         [_____]         <br/><br/>         Third<br/>         [_____]</p> |
| <p>(80) If someone from your village steals your cattle, what would you do?<br/> <i>(Rank the top three however if there are less than three, only list what they want listed)</i><br/> <b>Nyo ikokini<br/>         iyong kerai<br/>         kekoko idio<br/>         tunganan<br/>         ngatuk kori<br/>         ngiboro alore<br/>         kus?</b></p>  | <p>1= Try to track your cattle yourself<br/>         2= Try to track your cattle with your warrior group<br/>         3= Take matters to the elders<br/>         4= Involve the police<br/>         5= Report to UPDF<br/>         6= Report to LDU<br/>         7= Discuss with community prior acting<br/>         8= Beat the person<br/>         9= Kill the person<br/>         10= Steal their cattle in retaliation<br/>         11= Report to a government</p> | <p>Main<br/>         [_____]         <br/><br/>         Secondary<br/>         [_____]         <br/><br/>         Third<br/>         [_____]</p> |

official/LC1  
 12= Report to  
 witch doctor  
 13= He has to  
 compensate  
 14= Nothing

(81) If someone  
 from another  
 village steals  
 your cattle,  
 what would  
 you do?

*(Rank the top three  
 however if there are  
 less than three, only  
 list what they want  
 listed)*

*Ani bo kerai ice  
 alore ke ece  
 ekokoit ngatuk  
 kori ngiboro  
 kon alo sub-  
 county kus,  
 kitiyak iyong  
 anu?*

1= Try to track your  
 cattle yourself  
 2= Try to track your  
 cattle with your warrior  
 group  
 3= Take matters to the  
 elders  
 4= Involve the police  
 5= Report to UPDF  
 6= Report to LDU  
 7= Discuss with  
 community prior acting  
 8= Beat the person  
 9= Kill the person  
 10= Steal their cattle in  
 retaliation  
 11= Report to a  
 government official/LC1  
 12= Report to witch  
 doctor  
 13= He has to  
 compensate  
 14= Nothing

Main

[\_\_\_\_\_]

Secondary

[\_\_\_\_\_]

Third

[\_\_\_\_\_]

(82) Are there particular problems that you take to the elders? (Please explain)

*Eya n̄adikiro n̄una itemokino tolimokinae n̄ikasikou a?*

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